

# Season's Briefings!

Sváteční insighty pro kreativce i strategy, co se přes léto potí, aby splnili vánoční přání svých klientů



CONTAGIOUS

We know that Christmas regularly comes early for creative agencies, and it usually brings stress and late nights rather than peace and good will.

Across the UK and much of Europe, Christmas is the biggest occasion in the advertising calendar in terms of both commercial and cultural expectations, and the pressure to get it right is intense.

Agencies are often required to judge the mood of their market up to nine months in advance to get the work ready in good time, which was never easy but has only got more difficult in an age of pandemics and economic turmoil and technological upheaval and social unrest.

It's enough to make you say, 'bah! humbug!'

To help you crack those Christmas briefs, we have collected some of the best festive campaigns and strategy interviews from Contagious IQ, our members-only platform packed with tens of thousands of case studies.

Like a good selection box, it contains interesting new picks along with some established classics. It's no Christmas miracle, but we hope that you find it useful.



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# Naughty or Nice Baubles

Australian department store Myer developed a Christmas bauble to get kids to behave and drive footfall in-store



Australian retailer Myer created a Christmas ornament that changes from green to red to indicate how naughty or nice you've been. Kids think it's magic, Santa or both. But the parents who bought it (for AUD\$19.95, at any Myer department store) know that it's controlled by Bluetooth.

The bauble was paired with an app, so parents could change the colour to coerce their kids into good behaviour, or be faced with a stocking full of coal. Have more than one child? Don't worry, you can separately program several different baubles from the same app.

Clemenger BBDO in Melbourne created

the Naughty or Nice Baubles, as well as films promoting them. The campaign was also supported by outdoor executions, which featured data gathered from the baubles by location. The outdoor ads were also updated in real time. If the majority of baubles in New South Wales switched from naughty to nice, for example, the billboards adjusted accordingly.

**Results** / According to the case study, the ornaments sold out within 11 days and 42% of them were purchased by new Myer customers. Those that purchased a bauble spent twice as much in-store and re-visited the store 4X more than other shoppers. After 10 years of decline, sales increased by 1.6%.



## Contagious Insight /

**Footfall driver /** Getting people in store is Myer's goal here. 'This year, we wanted to inject a little bit of magic into the Christmas retail period, and give Australians a way to keep track of how naughty or nice they've been ahead of the big day,' Andrew Egan, Myer's group general manager of marketing, said in a press release. 'By creating this exclusive product, we hope to give consumers an extra reason to visit Myer for

their Christmas shopping needs.'

It makes sense for Myer to want to encourage people to come in store because that's where spontaneous purchases happen. A 2017 study, by online credit card marketplace CreditCards.com, found that 68% of impulse purchases in the US are still made in bricks-and-mortar stores. When people shop online, they tend to have a specific item in mind and go straight to it – often even ignoring what's on the home page and going straight to the search

bar – whereas in store, the products that are more visible often sell better.

As Rei Inamoto, partner at Brooklyn agency Inamoto & Co., told us in an interview about a Uniqlo chatbot that he designed to drive footfall: 'People end up spending more in store because, even though they might have just come in for a pair of socks, this item is on the shelf and they like it, so they end up buying it.'

While you can buy the bauble online as well as in store, it'll cost you an extra ten bucks to get it delivered to you. Whereas collecting it in store is free. So even if customers start their shop online, they have good reason to continue it in store.

**Branded reminder /** As well as getting customers into Myer stores, this campaign brings Myer into customers' homes. The bauble, as well as the smartphone app, will serve as a constant reminder of the brand throughout the festive period, keeping it top of mind at the exact time everyone's planning what presents to buy.

This association will be positive, because Myer is positioning itself as an ally to parents by providing them with a tool to get their kids to behave. And will inextricably link Myer to the festive season, which is ideal for a department store as its usually the most lucrative time of the year.

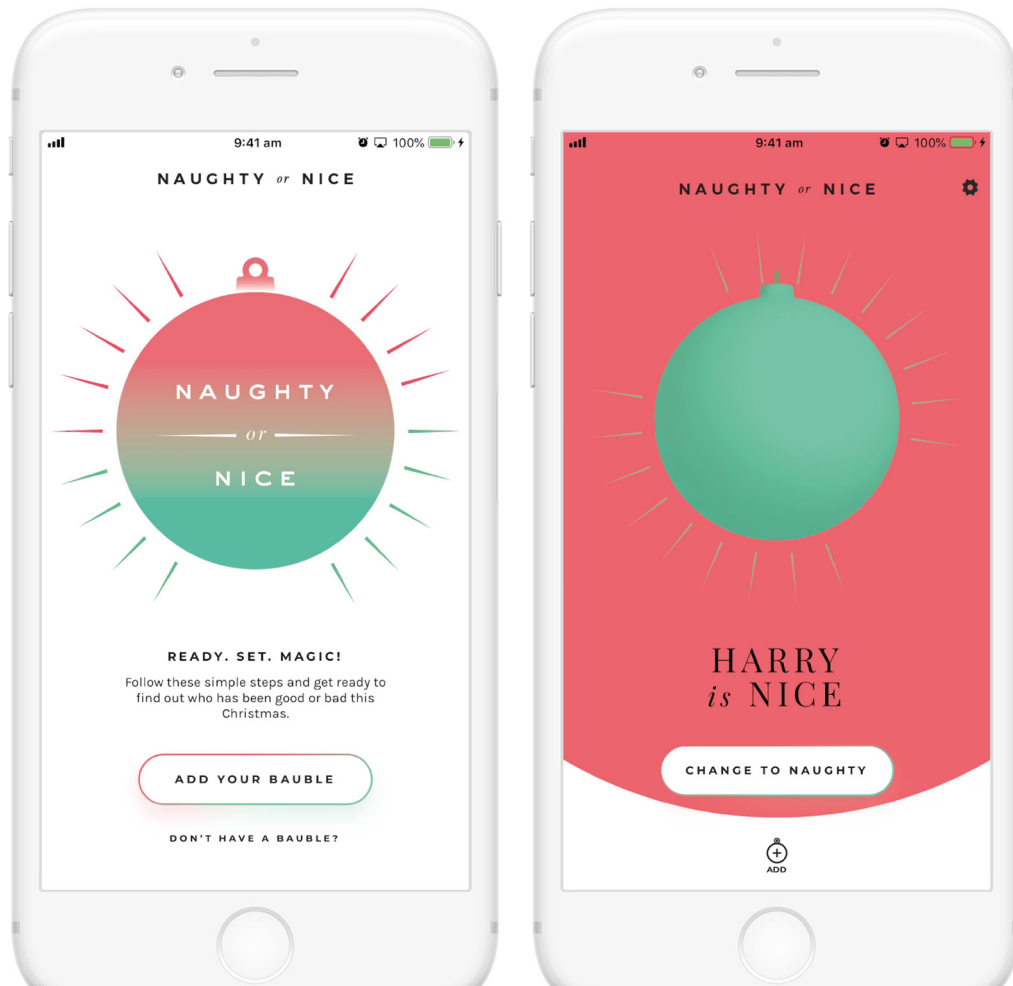
Think Christmas, think Myer, then go buy all your Christmas presents from its vast array of shops. By connecting its brand so thoroughly to Christmas that it's actually on customer's trees, Myer is increasing the chances that its brand will be the first thing people think of when deciding where to go Christmas shopping.

**'People end up spending more in store because, even though they might have just come in for a pair of socks, this item is on the shelf and they like it, so they end up buying it.'**

Rei Inamoto, Inamoto & Co

**Cultural precedent /** This isn't the first object that's been created to help parents coax their kids into doing what they're told during the holiday season. In 2004, Chanda Bell published the book *The Elf on the Shelf*, which told the story of an elf whose job it was to watch children and report back to Santa, so he could decide his naughty or nice list. Each of the books came with a little elf doll, which parents could place around the house to keep an eye on their kids.

It's not just a niche quirky thing, CNN Money reported last year that more than 11 million copies of the book had been sold. So while at first it might seem a little mean to trick your kids with threats of the naughty list, remember many people have done it already so it's probably harmless. The fact that parents have done it before also shows that it's an established behaviour. ❄️



# Bounty Return Scheme /

Why a chocolate brand launched a Christmas campaign allowing people to return its product in a bid to distinguish itself during the crucial sales period

In November 2021 Celebrations began a campaign that allowed people to return the most unpopular chocolate in its assortment tub, the coconut-filled Bounty, and exchange it for the more widely loved Malteser Teasers.

Celebrations was working off the insight that 52% of Brits (out of a survey of 2,000) dislike the Bounty chocolate the most out of the Celebrations chocolate box (which also includes Snickers, Milky Way and Twix bars). But rather than let it go to waste, people could return the chocolate from 17 January 2022 at one of three Co-op supermarkets in the UK.

Created by London agency Taylor Herring, the Bounty Return Scheme launched with a humorous spot that followed the story of the anthropomorphised Bounty struggling to find love at Christmas. The online film, called *The Lonely Bounty*, ended with the bar finding love in the form of another unloved Christmas product: the Brussels sprout.

Contagious spoke to Taylor Herring's chief creative officer, Peter Mountstevens, about the campaign.



## Can you give an overview of the Celebrations brand?

**Peter Mountstevens:** Mars is a new client, we only started working with it in the latter half of 2021. But, in terms of the briefing we had, the brand focuses itself around the joy of connecting others and the magic of bitesize chocolates. While that promise has remained the same for several years, there has been an evolution in its marketing. When it first launched, Celebrations was very much a casual gifting product and Christmas was its key consumption occasion. In recent years, there's been a focus on trying to push Celebrations as a product to purchase throughout the whole year, rather than just during the festive season. As a result, the brand has been spreading its marketing more evenly across the year rather than homing in on Christmas.

Alongside that, there has been an evolution in the brand's tone of voice,

particularly on social. Celebrations has become much more humorous in how it engages with consumers on its own channels, but it's also something that's coming out in its marketing.

## How important are assortment tubs for Mars Wrigley during Christmas?

Assortment tubs are massively important to the brand and Celebrations is its single biggest selling gifting product. Of course, Christmas is still a key sales period, but also Easter and other festive periods.

## Tell us about the brief for the campaign. What was the challenge? What were the key business objectives?

In short, the brand wanted to own the conversation around sharing tubs and chocolate during Christmas. All the

competitor brands were, of course, giving similar briefs out to their agencies too, but the subtext was that we had to drive fame and consideration at a time when everyone else was trying to do the same thing. Ideally, it would also have a knock-on effect on sales.

Bounty Return Scheme wasn't meant to be the main idea though. There was a big above-the-line campaign called Bring The Whoop Whoop that they executed with AMV BBDO [see below]. The brief to us was how to keep the conversation going after that debuted in the run-up to Christmas.

## Did the client set out any KPIs?

The client told us to knock-it out of the park. While a key objective was to have an impact on sales, success was mostly being measured in PR, reach and earned media.

## What was your first reaction when you heard the brief?

We were really excited. You're pushing on an open door when it comes to a PR-driven campaign during Christmas because journalists are constantly looking for festive content. However, we knew we needed to find our Trojan horse, ie a campaign with a great creative hook that got people interested and then allowed us to talk about the brand in more detail.

## Did you do any research to help inform the direction of the campaign?

Mars already had a lot of insight into what conversations happen around Celebrations at Christmas via its social channels. One of the things that came up was how people

prefer some chocolates over others and do things like rank what order they are going to eat them in. A quick search on Twitter or Google showed how divisive the Bounty chocolate is, with some people who are evangelists for it and others who detest it. So, it felt like really rich territory and that's what sparked the idea for the creative.

## Who is the target audience for the campaign?

The brand is for everyone and we weren't necessarily trying to reach a particular audience. However, younger demographics like Gen Z and millennials are the most vocal when it comes to discussing chocolate on platforms like Instagram and Twitter, so I suppose it was likely to appeal to them.

## How did you convince the client to go for a campaign that drew attention to a weakness?

It was really easy. I don't think it was so much about admitting a product weakness as it was tapping into a conversation about people's tastes. In fact, it's actually a theme that Celebrations has played on before. For example, in 2020, the brand released an advent calendar full of Celebrations chocolate and there was a lot of backlash because Bounty was the first chocolate that people opened up. There was a fair bit of online traffic with people saying that Celebrations had ruined their day. So, the brand decided to deliberately put a Bounty behind the first and second window of its advent calendar the following year. Celebrations was basically trolling its consumers in a fun, playful way and it got picked up by the media.



## 'It was really a piece of social content masquerading as a Christmas ad'

Peter Mountstevens, Taylor Herring



**The campaign kicked off with a humorous spot starring an anthropomorphised Bounty who struggles to find love at Christmas. Tell how this idea came about.**

We knew we wanted to do something around the idea that people don't like the Bounty chocolate and it was a natural next step to think what if we created a service for people to swap it in for something else. That was the core idea. However, the brief was about promoting sales, awareness and fame pre-Christmas so that's why we decided to make a parody of a Christmas ad. For all intents and purposes, it looked like a Christmas ad that was playing into all the tropes, but it was really a piece of social content masquerading as a Christmas ad. We played with a lot of different ways to bring it to life, but we thought a humanised Bounty looking for love was quite fun.

**Why this choice of tone?**

The tone is a continuation of the work that Celebrations has been doing. We didn't have the budget to do anything that would get us up there with the likes of John Lewis' Christmas ad, but I think by making a parody, we were able to achieve a more underdog, humorous tone that captured what the campaign was trying to achieve.

**There are various pity-inducing scenes in the spot like the unwanted chocolate being stood up on a date. How did you select the content for the ad?**

We were paying homage to a lot of famous movie scenes showing people heartbroken

or in love, such as *Love Actually* and *Bridget Jones' Diary* that we thought people would pick up on. The crucial thing was that we deliberately wanted to tap into clichés.

**Tell us about the rest of the media plan you had in place. How did you ensure that this would create noise?**

This campaign wasn't about having a massive media spend, it was very much rooted in PR. In fact, we only had £20,000 [\$27,000] and we just split it across Instagram and Twitter to spark the flame of conversation. We were relying on coming up with an idea that was super newsworthy and very shareable.

A huge part of our strategy was to gatecrash all the Christmas ads by the big brands with our spot that looked like it was for TV but never aired there. So, we emulated everything that they were doing like social listening to work out when to launch the ad and sending teasers such as tubs that were filled solely with Bounty chocolates to journalists.

**Why were there so few locations to actually swap the bars? Were you concerned this would hinder the campaign?**

We didn't expect millions of people to save their Bounty chocolates in a jar so that they could return them at our pop-up. However, for the story to work, we had to add a level of authenticity to it. Remarkably, some people did show up but there was a lot of dead time, which we used to give out chocolates, but crowd control issues weren't front of mind.

## What challenges did you face along the way and how did you overcome them?

Budget was an issue and we had to find cost efficiencies wherever we could. For example, rather than hiring a musician to sing the soundtrack of the ad, we actually got our creative director to sing the song as it's free of copyright. I think that only cost us £50 [\$68], but it could have been a huge amount had we brought someone in. Filming the ad was a very difficult and detailed process with lots of little nuances.

If you look at the scene of the Bounty in his study, the books are all about living alone at Christmas – there were lots of extras that we added in.

As I mentioned, the other challenge was trying to piggyback on the big brands releasing their ads. We actually studied when they had released their ads in previous years and stuck the pin in the middle as such. Then, all of a sudden, everyone started releasing their ads early and we thought we had missed the bus. But, we stuck to our guns and it ended up working out.



## Tell us about the results that you've seen. How did it affect the brand's Christmas sales?

The results have been phenomenal. It's the single most successful earned-first campaign in Mars Wrigley's history in the UK in terms of results and that's across its whole portfolio. The brand wanted to own the conversation at Christmas and via its own tracking, they were up by 450% in terms of share of voice versus Quality Street, which is its nearest rival. I'm not saying we were solely responsible as there was other stuff going on, but sales were also up versus what was projected.

In terms of earned results, there have been millions of views, around 500 articles so far, 200 video embeds and it was trending on Twitter the day it launched. Celebrations also ended up gaining an additional 5% to 10% of

followers on its social channels overnight. It really outperformed all expectations.

## What advice would you give to marketers when it comes to winning the battle for attention during a key consumption occasion like Christmas?

You have to be distinctive and not get lost in the sea of seasonal sameness, which is very easy to do. Everyone uses the same tired tropes and who the campaign is for can get completely lost. With the Bounty Return Scheme, we parodied those tropes and that's what gave it its distinctiveness. The other thing is to make sure that you're starting a conversation that people are already having, there has to be existing interest and that will enable you to ignite the idea – you don't need to have a huge media spend to earn fame. 🎄







# Help! The Game /

Australian insurance firm NRMA launched a board game before Christmas to educate players on risk assessment

**A**s Australia's leading insurance provider, NRMA wanted to create an engaging way to emphasise the importance of home insurance in a country that is increasingly at risk of bushfires, storms and floods.

Working with agency CHE Proximity (Melbourne and Sydney), the insurer

launched Help! The Game, in time for Christmas 2020.

According to a press release, the game 'mirrors life'. Players of the game accumulate assets such as cars, homes, boats, pets, but they must also protect them with giant domes that represent insurance. The player who finishes the game least impacted by Australia's many threats (floods, fires, theft, snakes, storms, tornados) wins. There were

30,000 copies of the game available to buy online at [helpthegame.com.au](http://helpthegame.com.au) and in every Kmart store across New South Wales and Queensland from 8 November 2020, with a portion of each sale going towards supporting disaster relief and recovery for NRMA's partner, Australian Red Cross - the board game consequently sold out.

Help! The Game was promoted by a series of films, OOH, social, digital, PR and

ecommerce activations.

NRMA Insurance's director of content and customer engagement, Zara Curtis, said: 'We're always looking at new and innovative ways to help Australians understand risk and the value of insurance. What better way to capture the attention of Australian families this Christmas than by creating something that helps bring insurance to life in a fun and engaging way?'



## ‘One of the biggest challenges in the [insurance] category is engagement’

Caroline Hugall, IAG

### Contagious Insight /

**A departure from the category /** As Caroline Hugall, group brand strategy director of IAG (backers of NRMA Insurance), recently told Contagious, ‘One of the biggest challenges in the [insurance] category is engagement.’ As with previous campaigns, such as First Saturday and Safety Hub, NRMA has mastered the art of reframing dull admin as proactive, life-changing action. Where the brand’s Safety Hub campaign offered cash rewards in return for simple safety tasks around the home, First Saturday took an emotional approach by reminding Australians of the sacrifices made by the country’s first responders; this time, the insurer is engaging and educating people through entertainment.

Doling out home safety and insurance advice in the form of a board game – launching just before Christmas – feels like the natural next step in NRMA’s unconventional approach to the insurance category. If the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute has taught us anything it’s that ads that trigger emotional responses are more likely to be shared, but as the now-infamous Covid-19 ad

mash-up shows, ‘sombre and moving’ gets old pretty quickly. Through mixing financial incentives (Safety Hub), emotionally resonant (First Saturday), and now entertainment with Help! The Game, NRMA keeps its audience engaged in a variety of ways.

**Led by purpose /** ‘[NRMA is] largely purpose-driven: to make the world a safer place,’ Hugall told us. With this as its North Star, the insurance provider has plenty of room to play outside the confines of the category while staying true to one core value. Although Help! The Game takes a fun, light-hearted approach to home insurance, it serves its purpose as a reminder of the dangers posed to everyday Australians. Communicating the threat of natural disasters and a volatile climate could be heavy, but gamifying the message makes it a conversation starter for families as they play. Not to mention, the ‘edutainment’ style delivery also strikes more of a festive tone than a heartbreaking montage of fire-ravaged Australian homes and heroic first responders. As Hugall says, ‘When you can behave in a way that’s authentic to your true purpose, magic can really happen.’

# We Have To See More Of Each Other /

A little-known liqueur sought to make a brand for itself with an emotional Christmas film that garnered more than 11 million views



**A**n obscure Spanish liqueur called Ruavieja made one of the most unexpected viral campaigns of the 2018 festive season, urging people to spend more time with their loved ones before they die.

The campaign, called *Tenemos Que Vernos Mas* (We Have To See More Of

Each Other), was created by Leo Burnett, Madrid. The centrepiece of the campaign was a four-minute online film where friends and family members are asked about their relationship, how often they see each other and their respective ages. The participants are then told how much time they will spend together before (statistically) one of them will die. To support the

campaign, Ruavieja also created a website where users can enter their details and see how much time they have left to spend with their loved ones.

Almost 1 million people visited the website from 194 different countries and 700,000 calculations were made. Sales of the brand increased by 52% and, according to the agency, supermarket Carrefour

created a direct ecommerce button on its website in response to demand for Ruavieja which led to a 12.1% growth increase compared with the wider category growth of 1.3%.

Contagious spoke with Juan García-Escudero, the general creative director at Leo Burnett, Madrid, to find out more about the brand and the campaign.

## What kind of brand is Ruavieja and what was its marketing challenge?

Ruavieja has a range of liqueur - some are more creamy, you could compare them to Baileys - something in Spain we call Orujo, which is a liqueur that is widely consumed.

This is something that people consume a lot at lunch. You finish your lunch and you're talking about life and you order one of these.

But what happens is that these kinds of liqueur are usually offered unbranded in restaurants. It is even something that they give you for free. So it's essential for Ruavieja to build a brand. You could say that its main competitor is Baileys but really it's these unbranded products.

## So they wanted people to start asking for Ruavieja by name in restaurants?

Yes, but not only in restaurants. They wanted it to be something for the home, too, as something you'd invite your friends to instead of afternoon tea.

## 'We feel that people are more open to receiving these kind of messages at Christmas'

Juan García-Escudero, Leo Burnett, Madrid

## How long have you worked with Ruavieja?

We started working with them last year and it's one of those brands that you don't have to explain to them anything about purpose. They wanted from the beginning to be a purposeful brand. They understood that consumers today don't want to hear anything about products but more about what they mean and what they do that makes people's lives better.

And they were actually the ones that came up with the idea about the bonds that we create through life, and how important it is to take care of them because modern life is jeopardising those bonds.

## What was the brief you received for this campaign?

When we started working with the client last year we first created a campaign

that was an emotional video ad. They were super happy about it and people started talking about this brand that no one ever talked about and that was the first time that we introduced this concept of 'we have to see more of each other'. They wanted to outdo themselves this year, to do it even better, so that was the brief. How can we make it even better?

## So how did you decide you could make it even better?

We knew the brand was in a good place with the idea of reclaiming this bond with loved ones. The goal that we set ourselves for this year's campaign was to truly make that happen. How could we go from moving people to changing how they behave?

## Does Ruavieja have a seasonal association?

No, it doesn't. They're doing this campaign at Christmas because brands are probably more able to connect with certain kinds of emotions at this time of year. We feel that people are more open to receiving these kind of messages at Christmas. Don't ask me why.

## Were you set any KPIs for the campaign?

It was more about building a brand, perception and awareness than specific challenges in terms of sales. They know that they are constructing a brand and that's something that takes time, and so they're willing to invest in creating this connection between people and the brand.



### How did you get from the brief to the creative execution?

The first particle that sparked this campaign was a discussion that you have probably had with your partner. It was this argument that we see our families too often and always have appointments, and we never have time for each other. My girlfriend and I were discussing that, and I just said at some point: 'Have you ever thought about how long we have to spend with our parents until they die?'

I realised that it would be quite easy to calculate because I see my mum for lunch every Sunday for two hours (and I thought that was more than enough). I did a quick calculation and when the number came up we just looked at each other and got goose bumps, and we never spoke about that argument any more.

And I thought if this happened for me, then why shouldn't it work for other people? So that was the beginning of thinking about how we can create this tool and make it believable. That's what we told the client. We didn't even present anything.

### How did you go about ensuring you had the right data to pull off the campaign convincingly?

One of the key partnerships for us within the Publicis group was Advanced Analytics. We involved them from the moment the client was okay with the idea. We thought it was key to have a data analytics partner that would give credibility to all of this, because we didn't just want to do a simple calculation. Advanced Analytics were the ones that basically started seeking the kind of information that we would need for the campaign and they approached the Spanish

Institute for Statistics. But they also found quite useful information about other kinds of studies, for example how much more likely you are to maintain bonds with family instead of friends, and this created a whole depth of data that helped the algorithm be better.

### How many people have visited the website and taken the quiz?

Half a million people have finished the calculation and the time they are spending on the website is almost five minutes, which is incredible.

We also made the decision to be private in the output of the results. At one point we thought we could ask people to share the results, but we thought it should be private. There's a message at the end of the test so you can WhatsApp someone privately about it and you can, of course, screenshot it, but the idea is more that it is shared between you and that particular person.

### What was the media plan for the campaign?

When Ruavieja saw the potential of the idea they decided to invest their whole budget for the year, but it was quite small anyway.

First what they did was bought a video ad on the YouTube homepage for one day. They also bought pre-rolls with shorter versions of the campaign. It was just like that for five or six days before they got on TV, and we hit 6 million views, so it climbed and spread like wildfire.

This was all planned because they believed that instead of doing it at the same time they should allow a little bit of the organic abilities of the campaign to speak

for themselves, and then they would go on TV. We spoke with all the major channels and they bought a 90-second ad on prime time on all the channels. And after that day they came down from 90 seconds, to 20 and 10 seconds. [Ruavieja's total media spend was €1.1m (\$1.25m) for TV and €300,000 (\$341,000) for online.]


### What have you learned from the campaign that you think you'll take with you into future work?

We've talked about data so much that for me it's been key to finally do a campaign that's able harness the power of data and turn it into something that's completely emotional. Emotions allied to data can bring about amazing results. 🌈



# 'Have you ever thought about how long we have to spend with our parents until they die?'

Juan García-Escudero, Leo Burnett, Madrid

A man in a blue cap and apron is working at a fish counter, wearing gloves and handling salmon. A polar bear is standing next to him, holding a shopping basket. The background shows a grocery store aisle.

# WORK SMART, NOT HARD WITH CONTAGIOUS IQ

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# Sun Globes

Low-cost airline Transavia turned festive ornaments into travel voucher trinkets to tout its flights as the ideal Christmas gift

As the holidays approach, brands are ramping up the offers to get their products under everyone's Christmas tree. To insert itself into such a huge gifting occasion, Dutch low-budget airline Transavia took ornamental snow globes (a feature of the festive season) and created its own Sun Globes (Les Boules à Soleil). The base of each globe features a voucher code that unlocks two return plane tickets, with various sunny destinations on the Transavia network available for gifting.

Working with agency Marcel, Paris, the airline (which is part of the Air France-KLM group) created six Sun Globes, one for each available destination – Athens, Lisbon, Madrid, Marrakech, Porto and Rome. Each ornament represents an emblematic monument of the chosen city, such as the Parthenon for Athens, and the Coliseum for Rome.

The globe also has a QR code, which, when scanned, directs people to Transavia's website where the voucher can be redeemed and the destination, departure airport and travel dates selected.

The Sun Globes were sold for €169 on a microsite, with only a limited number going on sale. They were released in three

batches on 28 November, 2 December and 8 December, and were promoted on the brand's social channels.

According to the agency, the initial release of Sun Globes sold out in 24 hours. The second drop sold out in 30 minutes, and the last one in 20 minutes.



## Contagious Insight

**It's in the frame** / This campaign is all about reframing Transavia's flights as a present of choice during the prime gifting occasion that is Christmas. The trinket positions trips as a tangible gift that's inherently more seasonal than an impersonal voucher. Turning flight vouchers into evocative objects is smart, as the way information is framed has been shown to influence our choices by Nobel-Prize winner Daniel Kahneman and Stanford psychologist Amos Tversky (now deceased). This is because of the framing effect, a cognitive bias that conditions people's decisions on how information is presented to them.

By turning what would be a digital product into something real and relevant, Transavia encourages people to think of its flights as a gift, and the actual 'frame' in this case (a snow globe), is both fitting for the festive season, and ties into what Transavia does – transporting people to special places. There is also a pleasing surprise element for both the giver and receiver – what appears at first sight to be an unassuming (dare we say, cheap) gift, reveals itself to be so much more.

'The whole idea was to reinvent the principle of travel as a Christmas present. By giving them the form of an extremely old-fashioned and a bit trivial object, we wanted to give people the opportunity to trick their loved ones by offering them a simple snow globe,' Jeremie Bottiau, creative director at Marcel, told Contagious.

**Cheap travels** / The low-cost airline market is a crowded one. There are several very cheap airlines out there, just like Transavia. And rivals like EasyJet and RyanAir are more international and more established than the Air France-KLM-owned airline. In this hostile environment, anything that reminds people that Transavia is affordable is useful. And that's precisely what the Sun Globes do: as well as reframing buying plane tickets as a charming present, they remind people that they can satisfy their wanderlust at no great cost. Better yet, the limited-edition aspect of the campaign plays on the scarcity bias – the notion that the less available something is, the more people want it. In terms of driving actual sales, it's a savvy move, as it also makes the globes themselves feel that bit more special, which only heightens their status as a great gift. 🎁

# Monty's Christmas /

How the Creative Effectiveness Grand Prix-winning campaign delivered an 8-to-1 return on investment for UK retailer John Lewis



**A**dam&eveDDB won the Creative Effectiveness Grand Prix at Cannes in 2016 for its 2014 John Lewis Christmas campaign, Monty's Christmas.

As we reported at launch, the centrepiece of the British department store's campaign was an emotional TV spot about a boy who worries that his favourite stuffed toy, a penguin called Monty, is lonely and so buys him a companion for Christmas. But the campaign also boasted an array of digital executions that continued Monty's story.

John Lewis partnered with Samsung to create Monty's Den, an in-store space where children could take a photo with Monty and find out more about him. The Korean tech giant provided tablets on which children could create Monty-themed Christmas cards, too.

John Lewis also partnered with Microsoft, using its Kinect 2 technology to create Monty's Magical Toy Machine, which let children scan their favourite toys and then see them come to life on a screen. Meanwhile, Google's Cardboard headsets, allowed the department store to create a virtual-reality experience around the campaign.

Andrew Robertson, BBDO's chief executive who headed the Cannes Lions Creative Effectiveness jury, said Adam&eveDDB proved the work contributed to revenue growth of £132m (\$175m), incremental profit growth of £33m (\$44m), and an 8-to-1 return on investment (measured in terms of profit) for John Lewis.

We spoke with Alex Hesz, the then executive interactive director at Adam&eveDDB about the campaign and putting together all the digital executions.



### Why is Christmas a big deal for John Lewis?

It's a huge proportion of their trading each year and also a huge portion of how people begin to construct their relationship with John Lewis. Christmas is a particularly emotional buying occasion because you're buying for someone else and in quite a stressed environment where an enormous number of brands are asking you to buy the same kinds of products from them. Also, you've now got multiple ways of buying, either through an ecommerce site or buying directly from the retailer. There are a lot of companies trying to attract you, not just to their specific brand but also to their specific method of shopping, so what we're trying to say is that you can buy from us anywhere you want and you can buy anything you want. That sense of being able to offer consumers a more sensible approach to shopping at Christmas but also to buy the most thoughtful gift is the twin strategy.

### What was the agency's brief?

It was the exact same brief that gets given every year: thoughtful gifting.

### What research do you undertake before working on a campaign?

Because it is a retailer it's a very data rich business, so it's less a question of going out and doing research and more a question of listening to the data we get back from John Lewis. We look at how people buy and ask who are the most loyal customers and why, who are the least loyal? We look at those customers and the kind of relationship they



have with us and ask how can we broaden that while continuing to serve our core. That data-led approach is really valuable to us but [the process] is also about understanding the brand, and the type of experiences we can create that we know from having done this for a couple of years that people will feel is appropriate for the brand.

We could do click-bait work that we know would work from a pure numbers perspective but we also have to be really cognizant of the type of work that's appropriate for the brand. We're looking to build long-term relationships with our customers and that sometimes means taking the longer view and not necessarily doing the thing that's going to drive the most clicks or traffic.

### Your first Christmas TV ad for John Lewis was in 2009. How do you keep the campaign ideas fresh?

We sit down every year in January and brief different teams. We ask for something that consumers won't expect but also something that within two or three seconds of seeing the film or the windows you know is the John Lewis Christmas campaign. How can it have the DNA of a John Lewis Christmas campaign but still feel wholly unexpected and really move things on from last year?

### Is copycat advertising making it harder to stand out?

Our strategy hasn't been to do that type of advertising but it's just that there's been a common theme in some of the TV ads.

I think we have a license to be much broader than that and we have a right to be more emotional than other brands have because we are with people at more stages in their life than other brands are. But I don't think there's a recipe for a John Lewis ad. There hasn't been a set structure for what has to go into a John Lewis ad and I think this year we're going to show that.

One of things that we're really proud of on the digital side of the business is that we've moved from being a matching luggage-type brand to being one where we tell a story across multiple platforms, so it doesn't matter where you first encounter the story, you get this omni-channel experience across multiple touch points. The centre piece film is an enormously important part of it but it is just one part of it.

## Is there any sign of consumers getting fatigued from emotional ads at Christmas?

I think it's very easy for an agency to get tired of something before the consumers do. I think consumers want to feel something and John Lewis has the right to make them feel something. I think what exactly they have a right to make them feel is something that we should explore year by year and continue to evolve.

## What was the rationale behind the Monty's Christmas story and how was the narrative expected to influence consumers?

Trying to break it down scientifically is not quite right. We asked, 'Is this a story that feels authentic to John Lewis? Is this a story that feels unexpected yet immediately is recognised as John Lewis? Is this a story that allows us to explore, as we tend to do, the idiosyncrasies and observations of modern British life?' It was a hugely charming story that allowed us to explore family dynamics and what it is to be a consumer in modern Britain. It also gave us, through Monty and Mabel, a vehicle through which we could create a more immersive environment.

## What were the business reasons for expanding the campaign across so many digital touchpoints?

It's because it's a different shape of consumer. Where they spend their time and money is different. But I think as well there's an expectation now that the stories they love don't just exist in one place.

## Do you work to a different brief on the digital elements of the campaign?

There's no separate brief, teams or producer or account manager. It's one team working on one brief.

## How did you decide what bits of tech to incorporate into the campaign?

We asked 'What are the technologies that can best bring the story to life?' We started with the story and then met a bunch of partners and platforms. Some of them were technically awesome but not appropriate for the story. Others felt less magpie-like in terms of how shiny they were but more appropriate for the story.



## Did the digital elements of the campaign have a separate purpose to the traditional elements? E.g. drive footfall as opposed to build the brand?

Not really, they were designed to do largely the same things. There were some direct response elements of the digital, just like there were direct response elements of the traditional campaign, and then pure brand-building emotional moments just like there were with the TV. It sits across the spectrum and we can, as an agency, very easily begin to divide that into digital and TV, but consumers don't. They just loved Monty and the more they loved him the more stuff they bought from John Lewis.

## What was the trickiest part of putting the campaign together?

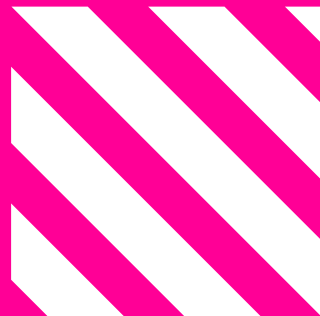
We're really lucky now that because it's got a bit of a centre of gravity, different technology partners and platforms want to be involved and they become involved on a non-exclusive basis. That's lucky for us because John Lewis is a department store. But also we've created something that has a role in culture so people want to be involved in it.

## Do you know how the digital elements of the campaign performed for the brand?

We know across John Lewis that social is massively traffic-driving to the website and then those people go on to buy, so we know the effect of social more broadly and we see effectiveness increase across the board at Christmas.

## Why does John Lewis release its TV ad on social media and on YouTube before it airs on TV?

We want to create a moment of chosen engagement with the brand. People wait for it and tweet about it, so to be able to give it over to them to share with their friends feels like the right thing to do and the generous thing to do. The second thing, from a pure numbers perspective, is it lets us get these two big spikes: first from releasing an online, global trending moment, and then the next day when it runs on TV you get a second spike with people saying 'Wow, did you see the new John Lewis ad?' and searching and finding it again. 🌈



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