



Champions of Design 2

More observations on creativity for competitive advantage from jkr



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Introduction

It isn't often that a design agency praises the work of its rivals but this year we are doing it for a second time, and with even greater enthusiasm.

We have increased the number of our champions to thirty-five and tried to include more winners from the supermarket aisle, not just high-end shops.

Our aim is to celebrate great works of design wherever we find them and to give credit equally to the people who created them and the clients who bought them.

We collected their stories from a series called 'Champions of Design' that we publish throughout the year – not in design magazines but in *Marketing*.

There is a little self-interest here. The more marketing people who grow to love great design and value its contribution to their brands the easier our job will be if we are fortunate enough to work with them.

Over and above this we simply want to share our appreciation of these enthralling enterprises, they never fail to inspire us. They are confirmation classes in our own deep-held beliefs. Which are?

1. Design is not separate from the product, it is part of it. It should emerge so naturally from the brand that it feels and sounds right, like the voice of a friend. If design is simply bolted on or used as wrapping paper the cracks will show and the product inside won't last very long.
2. People will pay a little more for something they want and a lot more for something they want very much. (Think of the last thing you wanted desperately and ask yourself what part its design played in its attraction.)
3. As each of our champions illustrates, design pays for itself many times over. Few other investments show such a great return. Of course we would say this, you might be thinking, but over 22 years as a design agency we have found it to be true.

These are the main lessons we take from the case histories in this book but there is another. A truly great design is inimitable: once you have it it's yours forever. Competitors may try to copy you but they will only come second at best.

All of which may sound very fine in retrospect but how do you recognise a great design in the first place?

Speaking for ourselves we think the answer is viscerally. We feel a mixture of admiration and envy. We wish we'd done it.

If you share these feelings when you turn the pages this book will have done its job.

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Toblerone

How do you develop a USP when you're just another chocolate manufacturer in Switzerland? Answer: fill your chocolate with a sticky nougat and mould it into a series of triangles which people subliminally assume to be a representation of the Alps. Toblerone might not be regarded as the highest quality Swiss chocolate, but it's certainly the first one you'd pick out in an identity parade. In a very crowded marketplace, that is surely just as important.



What defines an 'iconic' design? It's an overused expression, but, by my reckoning, Toblerone fits the bill. For me, an iconic design features a graphical or stylistic property that symbolises the brand's values and attributes, thereby creating charisma. One also has to apply best practice: the tenacity, over many years, to focus on the core iconography and keep investing it with meaning.

Toblerone has a distinctive shape and comes in a distinctively shaped pack. One that looks like a mountain, of which you find many in Switzerland. So this is definitively 'Swiss' chocolate. In truth, mountains might not have inspired the original shape, but original intentions are irrelevant – myth and meanings attach themselves to iconic brands like iron filings to a magnet.

It all sounds simple, but such apparent simplicity is a spark of genius. Over time, the iconography has allowed the pack to transcend its category. This is no longer another chocolate bar.

Rather it's Toblerone and it resides in a category of one. For proof of its genius, consider that Albert Einstein (employed by the Swiss Federal Institute for Intellectual Property in Bern) supposedly signed off the design – some endorsement. Another myth? Perhaps. But when the legend becomes fact, print the legend.

A top tip: if struggling to separate the last two segments of a big bar, use two fingers to push the mountain tips together. They will snap apart with ease. Some designs you just love, in all their dimensions. This is one of them. SA



Timeline



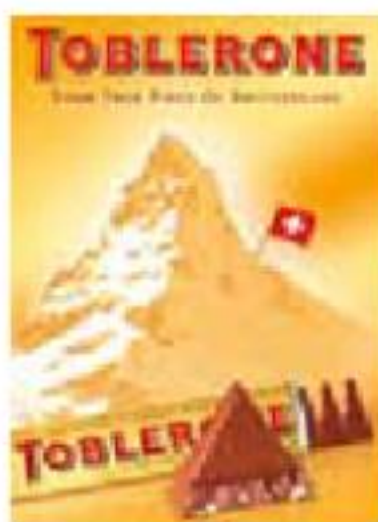
Toblerone logo



Vintage advertising



Toblerone tram



Advertising, 2009



Toblerone Valentine's Day box

1868

Jean Tobler, the father of Theodor Tobler, opened a sweet shop in Bern, Switzerland.

1900

Theodor took over the company.

1908

Theodor and cousin Emil Baumann created the recipe for Toblerone. They chose a unique triangular shape for the bar.

1909

Theodor Tobler patented the process for making Toblerone and the brand.

1969

A dark version of Toblerone was launched, followed four years later by a white-chocolate version.

2008

Toblerone celebrated its 100th anniversary.

2010

The chocolate bars became one triangle shorter to ensure the price stayed the same, despite the rising cost of ingredients.

Did you know?

One of the following six pieces of information is bogus. Can you find the confection of deceit lurking below?*

Toblerone 'Welcome to the Jungle' advertising, 2003.



1. The Croatian equivalent of Toblerone is called Kolumbo.

2. A complex of Manchester University student flats on the Oxford Road with low walls and a large sloping triangular roof is known as 'the Toblerones'.

3. In 1995, Swedish politician, Mona Sahlin, bought two bars of Toblerone among other things on a credit card supposed to be used only for government business. The ensuing scandal, known as the Toblerone Affair, forced her to resign. A similar storyline was employed in the Danish political drama, *Borgen*.

4. Dragon's teeth, pyramidal anti-tank fortifications first used in World War II, are commonly known as 'Toblerone lines'.

5. The largest ever Toblerone bar weighed 102kg and is almost one metre long.

6. 10cc were originally called Toblerone, but were forced to change their name because of fears about copyright infringement.

*The Manchester art rosters were known by a variety of names prior to settling upon 10cc, but none of them was Toblerone. Six is therefore the ringer.

Jägermeister

The marketing of Jägermeister is the stuff of legend. It has transformed an unknown, vaguely medicinal drink with an uncertain and slightly sinister past into a best-seller – synonymous with music, youth, sport and hedonism. The late marketing genius Sidney Frank is the man to take most credit for this. His techniques are widely studied, but he started with a simple premise. He simply described it as ‘the best drink in the world’.



Like Danny DeVito, Jägermeister demonstrates that popularity need not depend on either stature or beauty. Its packaging is a car-crash of an old-school Gothic logo-type atop a blaze of bright orange on a scrum-hooker bottle, but it oozes authenticity and power. Perhaps Jägermeister is so kitsch it's cool?

Among more sophisticated peers it is certainly something of an iconoclast, but its butch name and packaging bestow it with a character the logic of group discussion would never predict.

Logic be damned. Brands accrue meaning from use, not the other way around. Younger drinkers will frequently make traditional brands contemporary by bending them to their cause.

The now ubiquitous Jägerbomb could be put down to a lucky bounce – like cider over ice. The idea was adopted and disseminated by cutting-edge consumers and bartenders.

We should, however, recognise that the initially unappealing package was imbued with charisma by the innovative marketing of wily distributors Sidney Frank Importing. Godfather to many a premium drink, including Grey Goose, they fuelled Jägermeister's export growth by first introducing it to US drinkers with a squad of shapely ambassadors in the on-trade.

Jägermeister's now triumphant place near the top of the global spirits sector is testimony to how distinctive design, if given the time to wear in, provides enduring gain. *AK*



Jägermeister

Timeline



Advertising, 1970s



Sponsorship of Eintracht Braunschweig, 1973



Jägermeister flying bar



Jägermeister Porsche Turbo RSR



'Live Loud' campaign

1878

Wilhelm Mast opened a vinegar production plant. It served the nearby mines, which used it to cool the rocks before extraction.

1947

His son, Curt Mast, who had branched out into spirit-making in the 1930s, resumed production following a hiatus during World War II.

1972

Jägermeister began sponsoring motor-racing, including teams in Formula One and the German Touring Car Masters. It continued until 2000.

1973

The Jägermeister logo appeared on the shirts of players at Eintracht Braunschweig football club. A brief legal battle with the German Football Association led to the brand becoming the first to advertise on team shirts in the German football league.

2010

Jägermeister achieved record sales of 82.4 million bottles, despite the onset of the global economic crisis. The UK became the drink's third-biggest market, following Germany and the US.

2011

The drink once again achieved record sales, with 87.1 million bottles sold in more than 90 countries. Sales in the UK exceeded 5 million bottles for the first time.

Did you know?

Hunt for the truth in one of these at your peril.*



1. When the drink was launched in 1935, Hermann Göring occupied the position of Reichsjägermeister and was on familiar terms with the liqueur's inventor, Carl Mast. Therefore, Jägermeister became known in some quarters as 'Göring-Schnapps'.

2. Every bottle of Jägermeister contains eight drops (0.4ml) of deer blood.

3. Jägerbombs, comprising a shot glass of Jägermeister mixed with Red Bull, have been banned in parts of Australia.

4. Psychostick, a self-styled humorous band from Arizona, have written *The Jägermeister Love Song*. Sample lyric, 'You look your best when my vision is blurry/That's not what I meant, I can't keep from slurring.'

5. A (false) rumour spread around mid-70s Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that the drink contained opiates. After the story was picked up by the local paper, sales rocketed from 10 to 1,000 cases per month.

6. The company's logo has been interpreted erroneously as a symbolic representation of the phrase, 'Oh Dear God.' Perhaps a familiar refrain to those who have partaken too freely. The surrounding circle is the 'O(h)', the stag is 'dear' and the cross represents 'God'.

*Although the deer blood story at number two has become the stuff of urban legend, it is categorically untrue.

Perrier

Perrier is simultaneously a design classic and an eco-nightmare. Divorced from its teardrop-shaped bottle it doesn't seem half the product. Yet, its strong sales continue to defy economic downturn and the flak directed at the whole concept of bottled water. Its perennially chic image will be put to even greater test over the coming years, but ever-inventive ad campaigns have so far been equal to the challenge.



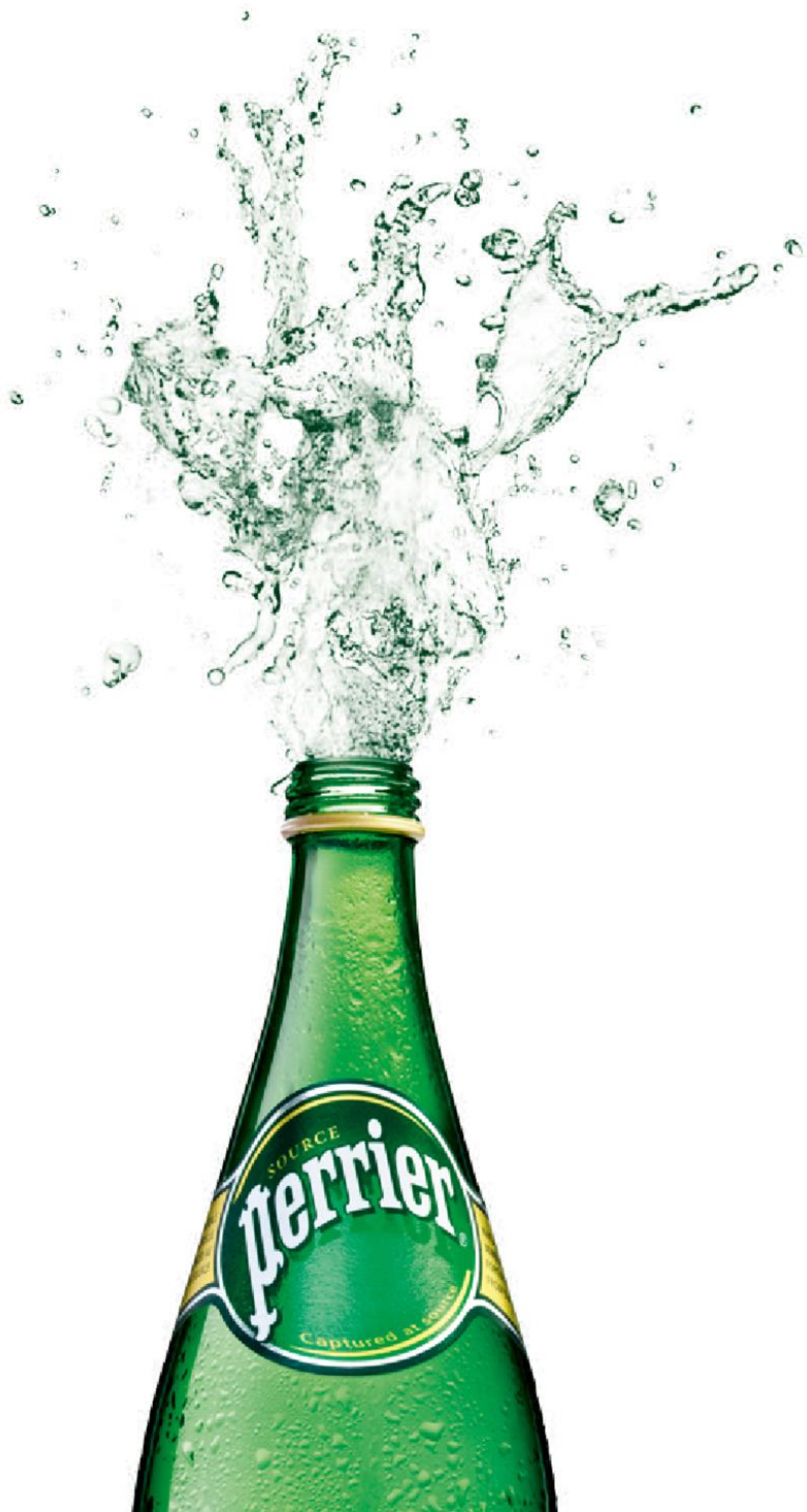
Although it pains us to admit it, there are some French qualities we simply have to admire. Perrier is the embodiment of many of them: effortlessly stylish, alluringly sophisticated and unapologetically stubborn. For while the droplet-shaped bottle is beautiful and distinctive, it is also impractical. Its curvature and singular contact point make it difficult to get down a production line with any speed.

That's what makes it the genuine article; it's too sure of itself to worry about such practicalities. Perrier is brimming with authenticity and that's why it sells 1 billion bottles a year.

The brand didn't just make mineral water an acceptable soft drink – it made it aspirational. As the line 'the Champagne of waters' brilliantly expressed, you really did feel like you were having a special moment when you fizzed open a bottle of Perrier. It was a truly status-affirming brand.

In recent times, growing concerns about sustainability and a stuttering economy have taken some of the shine off bottled mineral waters. Both our consciences and our wallets find it a more difficult purchase to justify, a truth that the UNICEF Tap project has exploited to brilliant effect.

Perrier has found ways to stay relevant though. Its limited-edition designs with well-chosen partners keep the brand feeling fresh. They also demonstrate the distinctiveness of its core identity. For even when it lends its pack canvas to someone else, it remains unmistakably Perrier. //



Timeline



La Femme Noire, Villemot



L'Etrenite, Villemot



Le Couple Dansant, Villemot



Cocktail Mondain, Villemot



La Rousse, Villemot

1863

Napoleon III gave mineral water status to a spring in Vergèze.

1898

Dr Louis Perrier bought a spring in southern France and began to sell bottled water from his spa.

1903

Sir Saint-John Harmsworth invested in the company, renaming the spring 'Source Perrier'.

1985

Perrier with a twist was introduced, with lemon, lime and orange flavours.

1992

Nestlé acquired Source Perrier.

2001

The brand introduced a PET bottle after 11 years of research into which plastic would be most suitable.

2011

Perrier launched Dita Von Teese limited-edition packaging.

Did you know?

One of the following facts just doesn't hold water.*



Perrier & Dita Von Teese, 2011.

1. Perrier paid a reported £250,000 to have its product featured in the 2006 version of *Casino Royale*. It ran a supporting ad campaign featuring a bottle sporting a dinner jacket and beneath it the words, 'Eau Eau Seven.'

2. Perrier was the first sponsor of the Edinburgh Comedy Awards. The first winners in 1981, with their production *The Cellar Tapes*, were the Cambridge Footlights, comprising: Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie, Emma Thompson, Tony Slattery, Penny Dwyer and Paul Shearer.

3. According to Perrier's marketing, each bottle of its carbonated water contains 50 million bubbles.

4. A 1950 advertising campaign for Perrier declared: 'Water which springs out as one opens it. Water that Laughs. Water like a handful of needles in the mouth.'

5. The idea for the distinctive shape of the original Perrier bottle is said to have come to Sir Saint-John Harmsworth when he was recuperating from a car accident. The shape of the Indian clubs he used in his physiotherapy provided the inspiration.

6. In 2002, Perrier introduced a less gassy version of its drink called Eau de Perrier which is sold in blue bottles.

*Eau James! There was no Perrier product placement in *Casino Royale*, so number one is a downright lie.

Staedtler

The ubiquitous yellow and black pencils it produces are such a part of our cultural fabric that its name is almost invisible. But Staedtler has, with the humble Noris and slightly grander Mars, ensured the ongoing prosperity of an ancient company which still espouses old-fashioned financial planning allied to industry and endeavour. Staedtler products are both beautiful and useful, miniature masterpieces that we should never take for granted.



For all its myriad innovations and ranges, it comes down to the branding of two pencils that has made Staedtler the definitive product in its category. The yellow-and-black Noris got us started at school; its distinctive livery can transport us back to the classroom at a glance.

As we grew up, those of us with a design leaning became aware of the Staedtler 'Pro' – the bright blue Mars. As Apple endured its tough times as the creatives' computer brand, so the world respects the Staedtler because it is the weapon of choice for designers.

We love it because the design is Dieter Rams in a stick. I dislike semiotic mumbo-jumbo, but, in this case, I grudgingly observe there is a semiotic dimension. First the name. Those Germans are precise characters; one assumes they keep their pencils sharp too. The bright blue supports this – it's a colour of care and consideration. It's calm and measured, but also bold enough to suggest a bit of personality.

The black tail with HB coding is systematic and reassuringly functional. Note there is no rubber on the tip: wielding this pencil you won't make mistakes. The Mars helmet icon says this is a pencil that means business – it knows you are going into battle against the tyranny of a blank sheet.

Poor workmen blame their tools, but a trained professional selects them with care. Staedtler's graphic purity shows confidence. This gives the brand charisma and cachet, and gets it into the hands of designers with rectangular glasses and wannabes alike. *SA*



Timeline



Vintage Mars Lumograph box



Staedtler pencil box, inside lid



Mars eraser



Noris Club colouring pencils



Staedtler Warrior & Patta footwear, 2011

1835

The JS Staedtler company was established in Nuremberg, Germany, following a long history of pencil-making in the area.

1866

Staedtler employed 54 people, with production reaching more than 2 million pencils a year.

1922

A US subsidiary was established, followed four years later by one in Japan.

1988

German production was relocated to a bigger site in Moosacher Strasse in North Nuremberg.

1997

The Staedtler Foundation, a non-profit organisation that holds all shares in the Staedtler group, was set up.

2011

The Staedtler Triplus 426 retractable ballpoint pen won a Red Dot Design Award.

2012

Staedtler's annual sales of wood-cased pencils reached 65 million, including 33 million yellow-and-black Noris pencils.

Did you know?

One of these pencil stories wants to lead you astray.*



1. In 2011, Staedtler's turnover was £220m. The company has no debt and is reluctant ever to borrow, preferring to invest profits in expansion programmes thus, growing more slowly, but sustainably.

2. Johannes Bell and Hermann Müller signed the Treaty of Versailles for Germany using Staedtler pens. The treaty was so despised within Germany, the company actively sought to suppress this information.

3. Staedtler has developed an anti-break system for its coloured pencils which it claims has boosted sales. The extra coating around the pencil stops them breaking when sharpened.

4. An advert for Staedtler shows an actor playing Albert Speer arriving at Adolf Hitler's office. He says, 'I only came to see your Staedtler,' but Hitler snaps it in two and drops it to the floor.

5. Visitors to its factories are not allowed to see the production line where the WOPEX pencil is manufactured.

6. The reason why Staedtler can claim to be more environmentally friendly is that it uses mashed-up wood in its pencil manufacture. This enables roughly 80% of every tree to be used rather than the 20% which is the norm in most pencil manufacture.

*No need to suppress that Treaty of Versailles story as it's bogus in the first place. Number two is untrue.

Hermès

Uncompromising on quality as well as price, luxury goods manufacturer Hermès is proof that there is more than one way for a company to make itself recession proof. Still family run and still employing individual craftsmen to make luxury luggage items in their entirety, Hermès stands apart from all accepted wisdom about mass production. It successfully caters for that small (but sizeable) elite that never need to see the price tag.



Here's a brand that creates desire beyond reason, yet succeeds through rigorous control of its products as much as through emotional flights of fancy. A brand famous for maximalist scarves and, conversely, its super-simple, but highly prized boxes. A brand continually innovating, while also remaining somehow faithful to its traditional roots. A brand with a cutting edge aesthetic, yet one that your granny would love to wear. In short, with Hermès, the relationship between design and business has some inherent contradictions, but it all works beautifully.

Perhaps it successfully embraces contradiction because all its designs share two fundamental qualities: skill and art. On the one hand, this is a brand of craftsmanship, from the high-end-saddle making to the 'hand rolled' hems of its scarves. As with a fine Cuban cigar, one knows 'it's the best'.

That lovely word 'atelier' comes to mind: craftsmen and women in workshops using the best materials and the best (often very traditional) methods, and hang the expense.

These skills are put at the service of 'art' – from the stunning scarf designs to the bonkers shop windows and the ultra-contemporary homeware. In Britain we might say that quality should be known, not shown. In Europe it's both, with knobs on. The marriage of art and craft – is this not what all great design strives to be? Eye-watering prices, offered without a blink, simply compound the impression of excellence. SA



Timeline



Satyr-winged saddlebag



Hermès wallet



Hermès scarf



Hermès gift boxes



Advertising, China

1837

Thierry Hermès established an elite harness workshop in the Grands Boulevards quarter of Paris.

1880

Thierry's son Charles-Émile Hermès branched out into saddlery and relocated the shop to 24 Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, where it remains today.

1918

Thierry's grandson Émile, noting the advent of the motor car, changed the firm's direction toward the production of luggage.

1935

The company introduced a leather Sac à Dépêches, later known as 'the Kelly bag' after Grace Kelly held it in front of her in a 1956 photograph to hide her pregnancy.

1937

Silk scarves were introduced.

1999

The company acquired a 35% stake in the Jean-Paul Gaultier fashion house.

2012

Hermès celebrated its 175th year in business with a London exhibition called 'Leather Forever'.

Did you know?

There's fabrication afoot in the following.*

Hermès flagship store Tokyo, 2011.



1. One Hermès scarf, normally costing between £230 and £500, is sold every 30 seconds. The Carré, as it's known, was famously used by actress Sharon Stone for a bondage scene in *Basic Instinct*.

2. The original Hermès box was cream-coloured with gilded edging. Shortages during the war forced the company to use the only plain paperboard available – which happened to be the now legendary orange.

3. In 1918, Hermès brought out the first leather golfing jacket with a zipper.

4. By the mid-90s, Jean-Louis Dumas and all the Hermès family were on the Forbes 'List of Billionaires'.

5. Actress and throaty chanteuse, Jane Birkin, helped Hermès develop a handbag after a conversation with Jean-Louis Dumas when she complained that her 'Kelly bag' was not practical. However, she apparently no longer uses a Birkin herself as she believes it gave her tendonitis.

6. African dictator, Mobutu Sese Soko, once bought the entire contents of a Parisian Hermès outlet and threatened to kill the manager. He was subsequently banned for life from all Hermès stores.

*Don't let the cat out of the hand-tooled bag, but number six is 100% fake.

Moleskine

Moleskine notebooks might have a slightly fanciful history, but what sustains them in the present and underpins the company's success is that they represent a little piece of affordable luxury. They elevate any piece of writing (even if it is just a shopping list) into something a little more pleasurable and, dare we say it, sensual. If that puts us a little closer to our inner Picasso or Wilde, where's the harm in that?



Moleskine gave the archetype of an artist's journal solid form, reviving a traditional format and serving it up as a definitive classic.

The design's detailing transformed a fanciful tale of artistic provenance into a real brand. The paper quality, the elasticated binding, the ribbon bookmark and the inside pocket discreetly holding a slip of paper (on which the brand's back story is told) all helps to convince us this is the real deal.

These touches got the brand stocked in and associated with all the right places. This took it from an arty niche to mainstream success. As with Filofaxes in the 1980s, plonking one down on a meeting table became a display of one-upmanship. As an early user I took the original leather-bound version backpacking, using it for its stated purpose – as a notebook for jottings and drawings. The robust design endured myriad climates and much bashing about, becoming a treasured companion.

Seeing it adopted by the world of business meetings rankled with me. It seemed vainglorious to suggest that notes from a dreary meeting might follow in the footsteps of Hemingway.

So I applaud the brand for also producing humbler card-covered versions for these more prosaic occasions. These 'basic books' have beautiful detailing. They show design can be about quality that is known, not flaunted. Moleskine's recognition as a status symbol has been achieved through design understatement – be it in the boardroom or the backpack. SA



Illustration by Raúl Gómez.

Timeline



Van Gogh sketchbook, c.1890



Moleskine & designer Marti Guixé



Moleskine City notebooks



Limited-edition Lego & Moleskine



Moleskine iPad & iPhone covers

1986

Writer Bruce Chatwin immortalised the name Moleskine in his book *The Songlines*, which later inspired the resurrection of the brand.

1996

Milanese publisher Modo & Modo trademarked the Moleskine name. Production began in China and the notebook was hand-finished in Italy before hitting the market the following year.

2004

Photographer Armand Frasco started the fan site Moleskinerie.com. It went on to attract 5,000 visitors a day and Moleskine adopted the site as its official blog.

2006

Modo & Modo was bought by an investment fund for €60m. The business was renamed under the Moleskine brand name.

2008

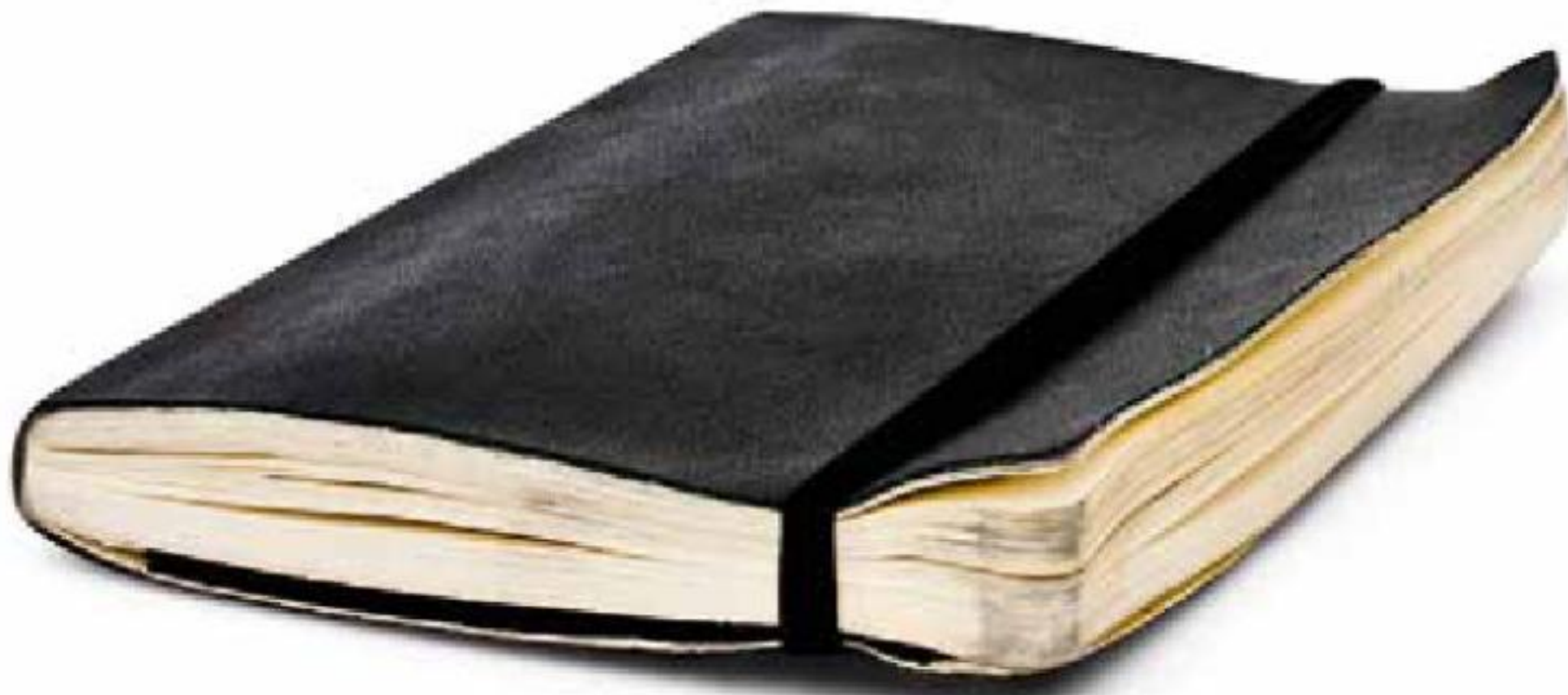
Moleskine America Inc was established, with headquarters in New York.

2010

Moleskine released a limited-edition range featuring *Pac-Man* to celebrate the video-game character's 30th anniversary. Other special editions have featured *Peanuts*, *Star Wars* and artwork by film director Tim Burton.

Did you know?

The veracity of one of these facts is paper-thin.*



1. In 2010, Moleskine had a turnover of £161m. It has grown by 25% every year from 2006 onwards.

2. The first Moleskine notebooks were produced with taupe-coloured pages, partly as a play on words because *taupe* is French for mole.

3. Modo & Modo's co-owner, Francesco Franceschi, has conceded that Moleskine's claims of an authentic artistic heritage are a fabrication. 'It's an exaggeration,' he admitted to the *New York Times*, 'It's marketing, not science. It's not the absolute truth.'

4. There is no official, accepted way to pronounce Moleskine.

5. Moleskine notebooks are ranked at Number 122 on the satirical blog, Stuff White People Like. 'It's a good rule of thumb,' the blog notes, 'that white people like anything that old writers and artists liked: typewriters, journals, suicide, heroin and trains are just a few examples.'

6. Each Moleskine notebook has an individual ID number.

**Taupe is French for mole, but original Moleskines did not have taupe-coloured pages. So number two isn't true.*

Not every luxury brand can justify its price, but family-run illy, purveyors of premium coffee for three generations, can point to several good reasons for charging more than most. It pays its suppliers more, is more exacting in its standards and delivers a better and more consistent taste than its rivals. Simple, really.



As a coffee-lover, it's a treat to write about illy. Fresh and friendly, but possessing an extra shot of Italian sophistication, it is the definitive article.

So what does illy teach us? Above all else, it is a masterclass in how to leverage a logo. The red mark is brazenly stamped on anything and everything: cups, awnings, ashtrays and any other surface that can be found. Its signage epitomises this approach – treated reverently, like a flag, ensuring you can't miss it.

There are three reasons why illy has made this simple strategy work so well. First, the brand has a really likeable logo at its heart. The typography is brimming with personality and housed by the bright-red background, it puts a spring in your step before you've even taken a sip. Second, it is consistently executed with care.

There are no 'bum notes' – even the sugar sticks look like they've been loved. Product details and other information keep a respectful distance from the logo, which is always set elegantly on white or silver. So, wherever you see it, illy appears loud and proud.

Lastly, the logo always seems to be in good company. Be it the sleek metal tins or the quirky espresso cups, everything tells you that illy is mighty fine coffee. Speaking of which, it might just be time for a cup... //



Timeline



illy espresso cup & saucer



illy FrancisFrancis! X1 espresso machine



'Galleria illy' advertising



Alioum Moussa 'All create together' can



'Galleria illy', London

1995

Andrea Illy co-authored *Espresso Coffee: the Chemistry of Quality*, about the science and technology of coffee.

1996

Artist James Rosenquist designed the red square illy logo, which is still used across the brand's products.

2000

The University of Coffee was created. It has taught coffee culture, from bean to cup, to the 5,000 students who have attended to date.

2003

The company launched *Espressamente illy*, a chain of Italian-style bars with innovative design concepts.

2005

illy opened its first gallery in the SoHo district of New York City, displaying work from leading international artists and design students.

2009

illy partnered Coca-Cola to launch a ready-to-drink coffee range, called *illy issimo*.

Did you know?

One of these leaves the bitter aftertaste of deceit.*

The illy Art Collection featuring designer espresso cups, 2010.



1. In 1991, illy began a competition to find the best growers of sun-dried arabica in Brazil. The prize for the winner was to become its supplier. illy doesn't use middlemen and it pays Brazilian farmers the difference.

2. As well as its famous coffee, the illy group also produces teas, chocolate, jam and wine.

3. illy was the first company to sponsor the Italian national football team.

4. In 1988, illy introduced a computerised system for checking every individual bean which rejects those which don't meet its rigorous selection criteria.

5. Andrea Illy, boss of the company, disagrees strongly with Fairtrade: 'Our doctrine is that we will pay more for better quality. Fairtrade is about paying a higher price for the same goods. That is against the laws of supply and demand.'

6. The illy logo was painted by the pop artist, James Rosenquist. It was originally part of a bigger painting which hangs in Andrea Illy's office.

*All truth has been filtered from number three.

Playmobil

There is something joyous about a company succeeding while resisting the lures of movie tie-ins and merchandising opportunities. Instead, Playmobil has put its faith in children's imaginations. The German company has not only shunned the advances of movie franchises, but even dares not to give its creations real names, lest it should discourage children from coining their own.



When one trots out clichés about the Germans, great toymaking is not top of mind. But they do excel at it, with a tradition for making things very, very well.

Playmobil is a case in point. On one level, we see charming little characters inhabiting a jolly place, their adventures played out under the packaging's blue skies. Nothing too dark is likely to happen. However, one look at the design blueprints reveals a totally considered product – ergonomically, aesthetically and conceptually.

The folk are designed to fit into a child's hand. Robust and collectable, it's the interchangeable nature of the little characters' costumes and props that is the design's stroke of genius. There is every chance a pirate might swap his cutlass for a baby's stroller or his tri-cornered hat for a construction helmet. He may even end the day a princess.

Civilisation is a result of our mastering of tools and our imaginative application of them. With the learning tool that is Playmobil, whole civilisations can be made in microcosm. Children can create and order their own particular universe, learning about how everyone can play their part and how everything connects. No small achievement for little toys that can be bought for almost pocket-money prices.

Garish 'cross-platform digitally interfacing' successes such as Moshi Monsters and Skylanders are likely to make Playmobil reflect on how it might evolve and stay relevant. I hope not – I think its own little world suits it just fine. SA



Timeline



Playmobil Cowboy set



Playmobil Adventure Brachiosaurus



Playmobil Dad's BBQ



Playmobil Pizza Guy



Playmobil Speckled Horse

1954

Horst Brandstätter joined the family company started by his grandfather in 1876. He moved into manufacturing plastic goods; its first success was the hula hoop.

1973

Hans Beck created Playmobil for Brandstätter.

1976

The first female figures were introduced.

2003

Playmobil celebrated its 30th birthday. A golden knight toy was produced to mark the occasion.

2006

Playmobil figures gained articulated feet in honour of the World Cup.

2011

Playmobil achieved turnover of €564m.

Citroën

Dogged by financial problems for much of its existence, Citroën has nevertheless survived and prospered in the 21st century. While the nostalgic might argue it has sacrificed quirkiness for the safety of the middle market, it remains a flagship of French technical expertise.



Name a car that epitomises French style. How about the Citroën 2CV? Or the DS? To create a vehicle that defines a national character is quite something. To do so a second time, from the opposite end of the market, is a remarkable achievement.

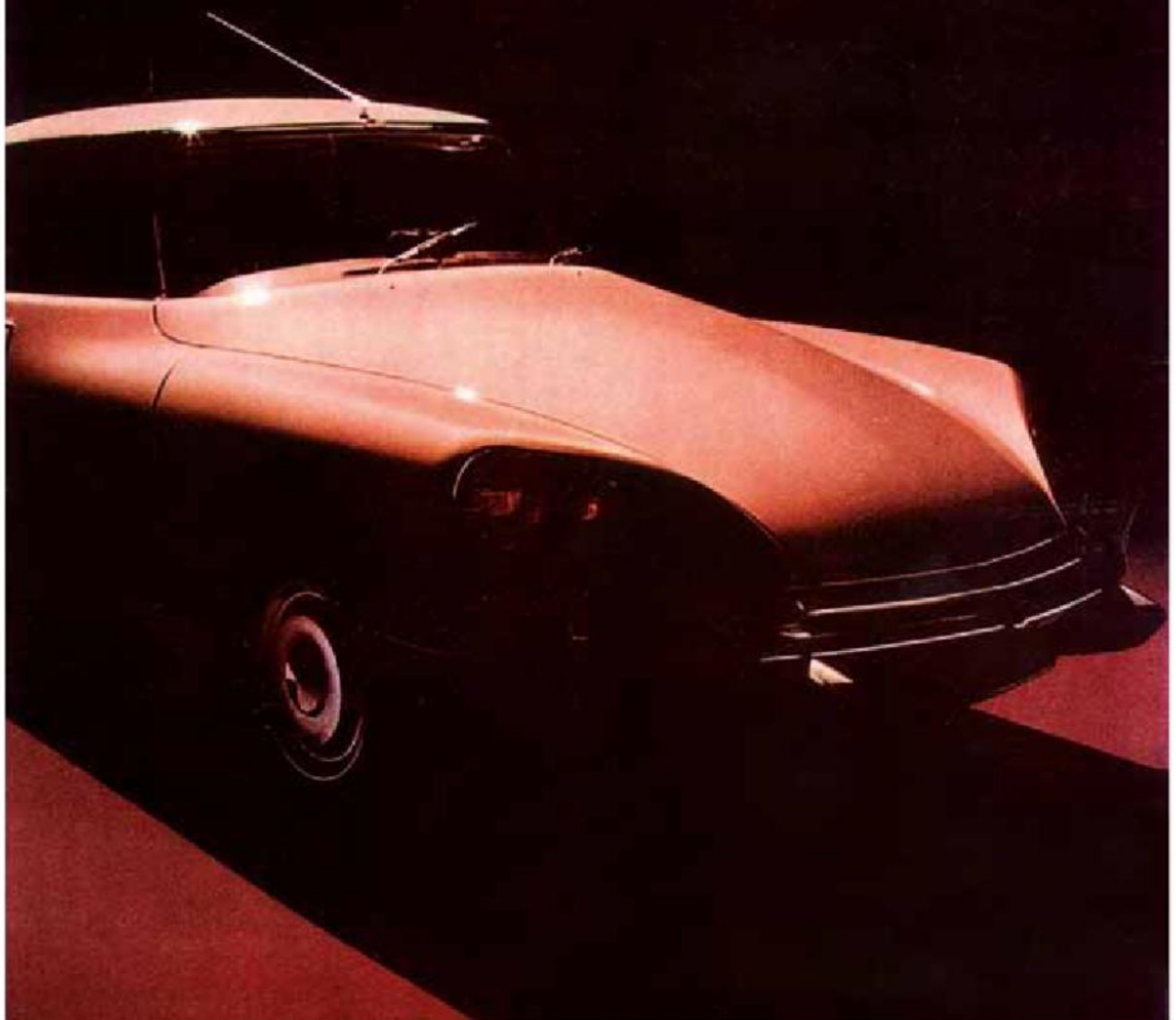
As designers, we regularly glean the germ of our most successful ideas from the subtext in the brief. The 2CV, for example, took its inspiration from the desire to ‘provide the peasantry with a motorised alternative to the horse, capable of transporting a tray of eggs over cobbled roads’. The resulting suspension had the travel of a coil-spring mattress.

The aerodynamic DS was conceived in secret during the latter years of the German occupation. It was deliberately designed to reassert French pride and became so closely associated with General de Gaulle, it must have been created for him. Sadly, however, the story of

Citroën has not always been so happy. With weak cost management, its avant-garde designs necessitated high prices and after the market weakened due to the 1973 oil crisis, the company went under. Rescued by Peugeot, Citroën was left to pursue diluted designs built on shared components.

However, mass mediocrity is ultimately unsustainable without cost-leadership. We should draw inspiration from Citroën’s recent success in commanding higher prices following its return to more progressive design with the new-look DS range. *AK*

CITROËN DS



Timeline



Eiffel Tower sponsored by Citroën, 1925



Advertising, 1960s



Citroën 2CV, 1979



Citroën C1 Airplay, 2006



Citroën DS3 Racing car, 2011

1923

A Citroën 5CV became the first car to be driven around Australia. The original vehicle, restored and in working order, is now owned by the National Museum of Australia.

1925

Founder André-Gustave Citroën advertised the company by putting its name in lights across the Eiffel Tower. The sign remained there until 1934.

1937

Pierre-Jules Boulanger became president of Citroën and a year later joint managing director of Michelin.

1961

Flaminio Bertoni designed his last car, the Ami 6. Though no match for the 2CV and DS 19, elements influenced 1960s car design.

1974

Peugeot acquired a stake in Citroën, increasing it to a majority shareholding two years later, creating the PSA Group – later renamed PSA Peugeot Citroën.

2009

Celebrating its 90th anniversary, Citroën refreshed its brand with an updated logo and new slogan, 'Créative technologie.' It also introduced a premium car range, bringing back the DS name.

Did you know?

One of these car facts is definitely a ringer.*

Citroën Metropolis concept car, 2010.



1. The first motorised crossing of the Sahara desert, from Algiers to Timbuktu, was undertaken in December 1922 by a convoy of Citroën Half Tracks (*Autochenilles*). It took 21 days to complete the 2,000 mile expedition.

2. French President, Charles de Gaulle was travelling in an unarmoured Citroën DS (The Goddess) when he survived an assassination attempt in the Parisian suburb of Petit-Clamart in August 1962. De Gaulle attributed his survival to the unique suspension of the car which enabled it to escape at full speed despite having two tyres shot out. The attempt was recreated in the opening scene of *The Day of the Jackal*.

3. Although seemingly ill-equipped to star in a car chase, a Citroën 2CV featured in arguably the most memorable scene in 1981 Bond film, *For Your Eyes Only*, when it provided an unlikely means of escape for Roger Moore.

4. Dusseldorf electro pioneers, Florian Schneider and Ralf Hütter of Kraftwerk, both collect Citroën HY vans.

5. The Citroën logo of two inverted 'V's is actually a graphic representation of a herringbone gear-wheel design, reflecting the fact that early Citroën models used a herringbone bevel gear final drive in the rear axle.

6. By the end of its first day on display at the Paris motor show of 1955, a staggering 12,000 people had paid deposits to own the new Citroën DS.

*Zit alors! Nombre four is built on a chassis of deet.

Roberts Revival

There's a good chance that a Roberts radio played a part in the formative memories of many a baby boomer. Its renaissance, in the form of the Roberts Revival, has in part been driven by that generation's delight in being able to purchase a part of its childhood. True to its pioneering spirit however, Roberts has been reborn by embracing change rather than simply appealing to nostalgia. It is proof that modern technology fused with classic design is a potent combination in any era.



Today the idea of a radio that does only radio is, arguably, an anachronism. Roberts was part of broadcasting when 'wireless' didn't mean streaming audio via a PC. Nevertheless, the Roberts Revival is a good example of a particular kind of 'vintage' design; it's progressive retro. Which is to say it might look as 'home and hearth' as a brown teapot, but under the skin it's bang up-to-date.

Trying to switch on an internet-linked model at a pal's house recently, the minimal buttons proved too modern for me to figure out myself and I had to ask for help. It might look old enough for a free bus pass, but I was the one left having a 'senior moment'. Roberts still has a twinkle in the eye and contemporary engineering inside.

Being progressive retro puts it in good design company, alongside the Aston Martin DBS, the Coke Classic aluminium bottle, Gucci by Gucci and suchlike. These are brands using nostalgia that also have an 'of-the-moment' quality or product

offer. It means they should retain relevance long after the vintage fad has faded and the 'Keep calm' poster has been removed from the kitchen wall.

Roberts still looks stylish because its compact, simple form followed function. If it had really embraced the design fashions of the time it might have aged less successfully. Today there are plenty of funky modern alternatives around, but I suspect your PC will be obsolete or look old-fashioned far quicker than a Roberts. SA



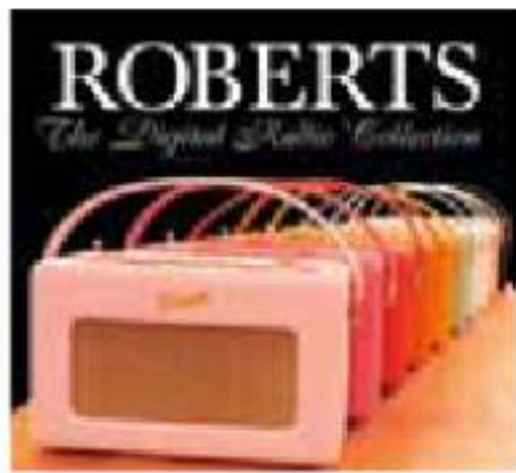
Timeline



Advertising, 1951



Roberts R505



'The Digital Radio Collection'



Cath Kidston & Roberts



Swarovski & Roberts

1940

Harry Roberts received a letter telling him the Queen had personally purchased a Roberts M4D model in the radio department of Harrods.

1959

Roberts modified one of its existing sets at the request of St John's College, Cambridge, for a battery-powered shortwave radio to take on an expedition to Colombia.

1961

The company produced a special-edition, solid-gold-cased radio. The publicity stunt attracted worldwide attention when it was stolen from a department store.

1969

Harry Roberts died and was succeeded by his son, Richard, as chairman and managing director.

2000

A special edition 'Revival' was created for the Queen Mother to commemorate her 100th birthday.

2012

The brand marked its 80th anniversary with a red, white and blue range celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Did you know?

One of these is broadcasting on FM (Flagrantly Mendacious).*

Jack Train (ITMA's Colonel Chimstrap) drawing the crowds at Earls Court in 1956.



1. Roberts launched the first solar-powered DAB radio.

2. The Roberts Sports 984 radio was the world's first 3-band personal stereo and was designed primarily with cricket-lovers in mind as it was capable of picking up *Test Match Special* which was then broadcast on Long Wave.

3. For many years Roberts radios were the only type of transistor allowed in UK prisons as their cases could be easily removed in any search for contraband. The 1975 Rambler 2 model was even designed with the prison population in mind.

4. In the company's earliest days, founders Harry Roberts and Leslie Bidmead were offered a free weekend in a hotel in Cornwall if they could demonstrate that one of their radios would work there.

5. Roberts is the only company permitted to engrave BBC World Service on its products.

6. Canadian singer-songwriter, Robbie Robertson and the late broadcaster, Robert Robinson, both featured in advertising for Roberts radios in the 1970s.

*Bard frontmen and combed-over quizmasters played no part in the company's 1970s ad campaigns, making number six the all-too-obvious fib.

MTV

When MTV has been at its most successful, the hair displayed on its screens has always been big. From the luxurious manes of the New Romantics to the backcombed edifices witnessed on *Jersey Shore*, coiffures of magnitude have served as a barometer to the station's fortunes. That the barnets in question no longer have anything to do with music might also be significant.



Through MTV's formative decade, its logo acted as a canvas for the whims of generations of designers, as it was constantly reinterpreted and played with. Unlikely to win a typographic beauty contest, the design instead developed a big personality. Like one famous early version, planted by an astronaut on the moon, it was a pioneer. The design application's kinetic exuberance was a fantastic complement to the shouted slogan 'I want my MTV'; it looked like a cheery yell.

As a design lesson it was proof that the medium can be the message. What I mean is that the myriad funky ways in which it was expressed made it visually reflective of the channel's fast-cut video content. It defined the style of the 'video age' as much as represented it. Which came first, the wonky claymation versions of the logo, or the video for Peter Gabriel's 'Sledgehammer'?

'The MTV generation' defined an entire era and when a design helps put your brand at the heart of popular culture, success will surely follow.

That was then. Look on YouTube for compilations of MTV idents. They predate the current approach, which is telling. The logo remains, but it's less spirited and colourful. It was a creative springboard; now it's a corporate anchor. It makes strategic sense, as the brand has diversified, and the less soulful expression seems fitting for the home of *Jersey Shore*. We get the designs, culture and media we demand. SA



Timeline



1989

The world premiere of Madonna's 'Like A Prayer' video aired on the channel.



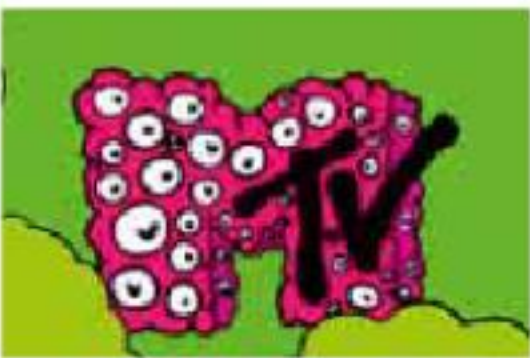
1989

MTV Unplugged aired for the first time, showcasing acoustic performances from acts such as Nirvana and LL Cool J.



1992

Presidential candidate and Arkansas governor Bill Clinton answered young people's questions in the first of MTV's *Choose Or Lose* forums covering politics.



2000

Comedy show *Jackass* debuted on the channel, produced by Johnny Knoxville, Jeff Tremaine and director Spike Jonze.



2002

The world's first celebrity reality TV show, *The Osbournes*, was broadcast by MTV.



2009

Jersey Shore became the number-one show on US TV and MTV's most successful series yet in terms of ratings.

2011

Mike Judge's *Beavis and Butthead* returned to MTV. It initially ran from 1993 to 1997.

Did you know?

One of these is to truth what *Jersey Shore* is to reality. And truth.*



1. The first words heard on MTV, spoken by John Lack, were: 'Ladies and gentlemen, rock and roll!'

2. MTV show, *Beavis and Butthead*, was accused of inspiring a series of arson incidents because of children imitating Beavis and his 'hot love for fire'. Beavis is partly modelled on Barry Manilow.

3. During a mid-90s slump in the channel's fortunes, *The Simpsons* mocked it by having Bart write on his chalkboard, 'I no longer want my MTV.'

4. Ex-Monkee, Mike Nesmith, is seen by some as the godfather of MTV because he produced a half-hour pilot for a music video show, *Popclips*. He had the option of shares in the fledgling MTV but opted for a flat fee instead.

5. Russell Brand was sacked from his job at MTV when he turned up to work dressed as Osama bin Laden on September 12th 2001. He has since presented both the channel's music and video awards.

6. The last book Gore Vidal completed before his death in 2012 was *A Shore Thing* written by Snooki from MTV's reality show, *Jersey Shore*.

*Heaven forbid that number six should be true! As far as we know, Gore Vidal joined the choir invisible without having sampled the delights of Snooki's magnum opus.

Paul Smith

Big in Japan and thriving in most other parts of the world, Paul Smith has been the most visible face of British fashion on the international stage for the past 30 years. In that time, Smith has cultivated an instantly recognisable but never clichéd brand of tailoring that has reflected the classic British look with a twist, which has been his signature from his earliest days. That the man has the same near-universal appeal as his brand only makes the success more deserved.



'I give classics just a little kick,' says the great man, and that pretty much sums it up; but Paul Smith is being rather modest. That 'kick' works only because of the quality of the design and manufacture, and resonates only because it has a genuine sense of spirit, rather than being something 'bolted on'.

Paul Smith's work feels like the output of an enthusiast – from the playful windows to the curating of various art books and objects at the back of the shops. One gets a sense of genuine pleasure being taken. You can't fake this stuff: when it's real you can almost smell it. My art teacher in the brand's Nottingham hometown was flown to Tokyo in the 1980s to paint a *trompe l'oeil* £5 note on the floor of the brand's flagship store. That's pretty bonkers in purely business terms, but success can fall out of such a spirit.

The brand's design is also about the judicious use of contrasts: those lairy, stripy colours are set off by the dark wood floors; the flash of colour on a buttonhole is set against a dark grey suit. For we repressed chaps stuck with sludgy or monochrome wardrobes, all those bright stripy accessories deliver the equivalent of a pick-n-mix sugar rush to a five-year-old.

Some brands have consumers; Paul Smith tends to have fans. A case of getting back what you give, perhaps? Now, if he could only give an occasional 'little kick' to his sometimes snooty staff, life would be sublime. SA



Timeline



Paul Smith in his Nottingham store, 1970s



Paul Smith Mini Cooper



'Is that a Paul Smith coat?'



Bertram chair, Paul Smith



Paul Smith patchwork shoes, 2009

1970

Smith opened his first shop, in Nottingham.

1976

First London shop opened in Floral Street, Covent Garden.

1991

Paul Smith received the British Designer for Industry Award and launched his childrenswear range.

1993

Launched accessories range and the first Paul Smith Women collection.

1995

The company was awarded The Queen's Award for Industry for export achievement.

2000

Paul Smith received a knighthood.

2006

Licensee Itochu bought 40% of the business.

2011

Paul Smith received Outstanding Achievement in Fashion Design accolade at the British Fashion Awards.

Did you know?

The truth has been materially altered in one of the following.*



1. The knighthood given to Paul Smith was only the second ever given to a designer, the first being the Queen's dressmaker, Hardy Amies.

2. Smith published his first book in 2001. Entitled, *You Can Find Inspiration in Everything*, it was described by Smith as his 'brain on the page'.

3. After making an off-the-cuff remark about rabbits bringing him good luck, Smith has found that he is sent between 10 and 20 rabbit-themed gifts from around the world every week.

4. The rent on Paul Smith's first boutique in Nottingham, Paul Smith Vêtement Pour Homme, was 50p a week. The shop was scented with Christian Dior Eau Sauvage to mask the smell of his Afghan hound.

5. In 2001, in recognition of his long-standing love of the comic, *The Beano* featured Paul Smith as a designer visiting the Bash Street School and lecturing the kids in Class 2B.

6. In 1976, Smith needed £30,000 to buy his first premises on Floral Street in Covent Garden from a retired baker. His bank manager at Barclays wouldn't lend him anything – 'he didn't like the fact that I had long hair and a red scarf.' But he scraped together £20,000 and the baker let him have it for £25,000.

*Sorry reader, but while Paul Smith does indeed love *The Beano*, he has not featured in an episode of *The Bash Street Kids*.

Yorkshire Tea

It used to be the case that you had to be born in Yorkshire to play cricket for the county. While that tradition has elapsed, a similar sense of regional pride infuses the marketing and promotion of this brand. Somehow, it has managed to attract rather than alienate those born outside God's Own Country. It helps that the product is very good and that every bag makes two cups of tea, a trait which appeals to the cost-conscious everywhere.



Yorkshire Tea's pastoral packaging captures our idealistic image of England, the 'green and pleasant land' in William Blake's *Jerusalem* and where Danny Boyle transported us at the start of the London 2012 opening ceremony. It's the image that comes to mind when you're far from home and missing the old country. Comforting and familiar, just like a good cuppa.

Where other brands present our national drink with some exclusivity and allude to its aristocratic descent, Yorkshire Tea is democratised and down to earth – a brand for a nation of tea drinkers. The name provides that assurance. No county is perceived as being more honest or no-nonsense than Yorkshire. The brand mark with its bold, sans serif type and slightly brash orange outline represents this perfectly. As does the directness of the line 'Let's have a proper brew'. You can almost hear Geoffrey Boycott as you read it.

The Royal Crest almost goes unnoticed, perhaps because we wouldn't necessarily associate it with such a grounded brand; but if there was any doubt whether this is real English tea, it's a final seal of authenticity.

True to its roots, Yorkshire Tea provides a lesson in being direct both in concept and execution. The vision of its creator, Charles Taylor, was simply to bring a little taste of Yorkshire to the rest of Britain. Michael Peters translated that idea directly into a piece of distinctive design. Now that's champion. //

YORKSHIRE

160 TEA BAGS



Appointment to
Prince of Wales
Taylors, Taylors of Harrogate
Yorkshire

HARROGATE
YORKSHIRE
TEA

... a proper brew

TEA BAGS

500g e



Timeline



Advertising, 2005



Yorkshire Gold tea caddy



Yorkshire Tea's 'Little Um'



Yorkshire Tea loose leaf



The Yorkshire Rainforest Project, 2011

1896

Charles Taylor won a gold medal at the London Grocery Exhibition for his tea blends.

1962

Bettys tea rooms and Taylors became one company.

1977

A tea blend was created and named Yorkshire Tea.

1984

Bettys & Taylors advertised Yorkshire Tea on TV for the first time.

2005

Yorkshire Tea replaced Typhoo as the third-most popular tea brand in the UK for the first time, behind Tetley and PG Tips.

2009

Taylors of Harrogate, including Yorkshire Tea, was awarded a royal warrant from Prince Charles for supplying his official London residence for five years. The brand was also praised by Noel Gallagher.

2011

The company appointed Andrew Baker as its chief executive, the first non-family member to hold the position.

Did you know?

Geoff wouldn't like it. One o't following isn't playing a straight bat.*



1. Yorkshire Tea sponsored ITV's *Heartbeat* for three years from 1998 to 2001. As the show promoted a cosy, nostalgic view of Yorkshire, it was a natural fit for the tea company.

2. Bettys & Taylors, the company which produces Yorkshire Tea, was ranked 72nd in *The Sunday Times* 2007 list of the '100 Best Companies To Work For'. It has featured in the list for five years in a row.

3. Bettys & Taylors have proved resilient in the face of the recent economic downturn. 2011 figures showed turnover rising by 16% to £102.8m with profits rising 21% to £9.4m.

4. In 2003, The Apostrophe Protection Society awarded Bettys & Taylors one of their famous Black Marks because of the lack of apostrophes in the company's name.

5. Yorkshire Tea has also forged close links with Nick Park's *Wallace & Gromit*. The company sponsors Wallace & Gromit's Children's Foundation which raises money for children's hospitals and hospices. The animated pair are shown drinking Yorkshire Tea on posters advertising the event.

6. Inspired by a 1990 episode of *Blue Peter* on the plight of the rainforest, Bettys & Taylors began a campaign of tree planting. Daniel Wild, son of the then chairman Jonathan, planted the first tree outside Bettys tea rooms in Harrogate. Since then the company has planted over three million trees and helped launch the Yorkshire Rainforest Project.

*The Apostrophe Protection Society (yes it does exist) would never behave like that, no matter how much pain said absence of punctuation might cause. Number four is a fib.

Pez

As its William and Kate dispensers demonstrate, Pez continues to be up-to-date and on-message which is admirable in an artefact edging towards its 90th birthday. Its position in popular culture is assured and its popularity is undiminished. Only one black mark: its mascot remains the scariest sweet-dispensing clown you could wish to see. It's certain to give any child (and most adults) acute coulrophobia.



It's ironic that Pez was created to help adults stop smoking, because the product's development over subsequent years provides a master class in how to appeal to children.

As the first brand to offer a sweet that doubles as a toy, it couldn't really go too far wrong, especially when the sweets are almost incidental. With Pez, the packaging is the product.

As a child, it's the character's head at the top of the dispenser, whether that be Mickey Mouse or Hello Kitty, that has you tugging on your parent's sleeve. To the parent, it's an almost equally easy sell – an inexpensive way to give their child a little bit of whatever fad is ruling the playground. It also provides them with some easy entertainment, because tipping back the head is a seriously fun way to serve up a sweet.

The dispensing mechanism is actually a clever, ergonomic design disguised as a bit of kitsch and is the thing that gives Pez real personality. It's also the main reason the stick normally gets emptied in next to no time. The other reason is the reload; filling up the chamber with more sweets makes you feel pretty sophisticated as a child, so it's another good excuse to keep eating.

As well as the circular satisfaction in consuming Pez, the countless editions mean they are also perfect for collecting. So, while the brand might have started out to cure one addiction, it has surely replaced it with another. //



Timeline



1927

Eduard Haas made the first Pez mints. They became popular among friends and family.

1948

Oscar Uxa designed the original Pez dispenser.

1952

A US subsidiary, based in New York City was set up to break the US market. A patent for its toy dispensers was obtained.

1991

The first Pez collectors' convention was held in the US.

1993

Christie's in New York held its first auction of pop-culture lots, including Pez products.

2011

A set of 'William and Kate' Pez dispensers was created to celebrate the royal wedding.

Did you know?

It's an open-and-shut case. One of these is a fibbing falsehood.*

Pez girl illustration by Gerhard Brause, 1950s.



1. To make a single piece of Pez candy requires 3,000lbs of pressure to compress the sugar into the familiar brick shape.

2. In the 1985 movie, *Stand By Me*, Vern (played by future Mr Rebecca Romijn, Jerry O'Connell) declares, 'If I could only have one food for the rest of my life? That's easy. Pez. Cherry-flavoured Pez. No question about it.'

3. *Family Guy* creator, Seth MacFarlane, has said one of the few jokes he regrets making in the show features a young boy leaving a sweet shop with a JFK Pez dispenser only for a police sniper to blow its head off. The boy then says, 'Good thing I still have my Bobby Kennedy Pez dispenser.'

4. The Pez company motto is, 'A treat to eat in a puppet that's neat.' Since 1993, the Pez mascot has been the clown, Peter Pez.

5. Pez authority, David Welch, was entered into the 2000 and 2001 editions of the *Guinness Book of Records* for selling three Pez dispensers for \$18,000. The dispensers were a gold-plated Big Top elephant, a 'softhead' Mickey Mouse and a headless dispenser bearing the words 'PEZ-HAAS'.

6. One of the rarest Pez dispensers in the world is a Monica Lewinsky edition which was released and rapidly withdrawn in 1998.

*To reiterate, No Monica Lewinsky Pez dispenser was ever released. Nor did we ever say that was the case.

Toms

There's always been a strong streak of philanthropy within American capitalism and Blake Mycoskie is at the cutting-edge of its latest incarnation with Toms and his One for One policy. Since founding the company he's been asked why he didn't just set up a charity. But at heart, it's clear Mycoskie is an entrepreneur and making money is what he does best. That he can turn that gift into goods for others truly is a virtuous circle.



The best design champions are not simply celebrating themselves through outstanding creativity or dazzling aesthetics. Rather, they put design to work as a means to an end.

Toms champions something 'beyond': a mission; rather than just being champion in and of itself.

It's the good that the brand does that makes it a champ. Design, however, also plays its part. First, the not-insubstantial price tags are partly justified by nifty-looking products. I guess the insight is that, while we want to do good as consumers, many of us don't want to feel that we are buying 'second best' to do so. It takes some skill to prevent a 'vegan classic' shoe looking how it does in the mind's eye.

Second, the level of branding is pitched just right. On the shoes, the discreet flag does not scream one's claim to socially aware cachet. That would be vulgar. But it is there to be seen, advertising one's conscience. Otherwise, who would know?

The eyewear is, perhaps, becoming less subtle in its branding, reflecting a growing confidence in the quality of its products.

Toms has a good design that does good and makes us feel good by doing it. It starts with how design can be a vehicle for an idea, rather than the idea informing the design. It provides proof that aesthetics can be a source of brand values. *SA*



Timeline



University Black Rope Sole



Ash Indo Vegan Classic



Red Glitter shoe



Tyler Ramsey Hand Painted shoe



Navy Geometry Vegan Classic



Toms eyewear

2006

Blake Mycoskie took inspiration from the alpargata shoe, which is worn across Argentina, to create Toms shoes and the One for One giving concept.

2007

Toms won the People's Design Award from the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum.

2009

Toms began the first 'One Day Without Shoes' campaign to raise awareness of children worldwide who suffer from a lack of shoes.

2010

Toms celebrated donating its one millionth pair of shoes.

2012

The One for One concept has been expanded into an eyewear range. For every pair sold, Toms offers sight-saving or restoring treatment, surgery or prescription glasses to those without access to medical facilities. So far, 88,539 people have been treated.

Did you know?

One of these speaks with forked tongue.*



1. Before launching TOMS, Blake Mycoskie had appeared with his sister on the US reality show, *The Amazing Race* and visited Argentina. It was on a later visit to the country to play polo that he found the inspiration to launch his company.

2. Within five hours of the first press coverage of TOMS, via an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, the company had sold 1,400 pairs of shoes.

3. During U2's '360°' tour, Bono insisted that all band members wear TOMS shoes when playing gigs in South American and African countries.

4. Many pairs of TOMS shoes have been distributed within the US itself, notably in parts of Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi and Florida.

5. Blake Mycoskie's first business venture was EZ Laundry, a door-to-door laundry company he launched while in college.

6. Mycoskie was recruited by Southern Methodist University to play tennis.

*With or without shoe, no such dialect was ever issued by Bono to fellow U2 band members. Number three is very much untrue.

Pret A Manger

It takes self-belief for a British company to export the concept of fast food back to the US, while also trying to tell the French what to eat (in their native tongue no less). Pret A Manger's recent international expansion has seen it accomplish both. Then again, Pret A Manger from its earliest days has never lacked confidence, particularly in its belief that the British sandwich lover would pay more for a better butty and a quick, clean, chrome-heavy service.



In terms of its performance as a design-driven enterprise, Pret A Manger can proudly award itself one of those solid-silver Tiffany stars it hands out to its most lauded staff.

Even if the posh-sounding foreign name, art deco font and burgundy star are a cliché, they succeed in telling a simple story – that this is a fresh alternative to shabbier sandwich shops, with a bit more class.

So we should be grateful for the impact Pret has made on British high streets, raising the bar for established operators and attracting a fresh breed of quality rivals, such as EAT. It's only been about 25 years since the coffee and sandwich shop revolution began, but we British can buy espresso coffee and interesting sandwiches almost anywhere these days.

Fair play to Pret for using design to face up to younger competition. Brick and wood have helped the stores evolve beyond their original cold chrome interior. The refurb encourages diners to stay awhile as the arrival of chatty packaging and witty graphics gently move the brand toward a more foodie sentiment, without being elitist. Maintaining popular appeal is one of Pret's enduring strengths and a prime factor in keeping the stores buzzing with activity.

Although the business lost its way after a slightly hasty expansion to the US, it has recently found its second wind. Goodness, it's even opening stores in France; how ironic is that? *AK*



Just Made

(Never from a factory)

Since 1986, Pret has been creating handmade, natural food, avoiding the obscure chemicals, additives and preservatives common to so much of the "prepared" and "fast" food in the market today.

To make this possible we build a kitchen* in (or very near) every shop. Traditional, well sourced, sustainable, chemical free, unadulterated goodness. No air miles, no shelf life, no sell-by dates.

If and when we make too much, we cater it to local charities at the end of the day. We simply don't need to sell old food, so we don't. We never have and we never will.

Thank you for loving Pret.
Julia Bradbury
(Founder)



Just Made (never from a factory). A Pret fresh sandwich doesn't need a "use-by" date. We make our food in every Pret kitchen using **amazing ingredients.** The best, natural stuff you'd want to use at home. Made today, gone today. **Absolutely no curing occurs.**

*170 kitchens so far (and counting).

Timeline



Avocado ears



Lettuce chefs



Cheese dice



Baguette shoes



Coffee bird

1992

Pret A Manger expanded with the addition of two shops in London.

2000

Co-founder Sinclair Beecham was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the catering industry.

2001

McDonald's bought a stake in the business for £50m. Pret's other co-founder Julian Metcalfe focused on the sushi chain Itsu, which he co-founded in 1997.

2003

Metcalfe and Beecham returned to day-to-day running of the chain owing to fears over the pace of expansion. The international arm of the business operated at a loss.

2008

The pair sold the business, handing over management to a private equity firm and Goldman Sachs in a deal worth £350m.

2009

Tuna was banned from Pret's menu because of concern over the unsustainable fishing practices used to catch it. Only pole- and line-caught tuna now sit on Pret's shelves.

Did you know?

One of these is a 100% organic, freshly made, free range, gluten-free lie.*



At the end of each day we give our unsold sandwiches and salads to local charities and shelters working with the homeless. We don't do this because we're 'nice people'. We do this because throwing good food (and hard work) in the bin is madness.

*A handful of our shops are still looking for long-term charity partners.
If you think you can help, please get in touch – pret.com/HelpingTheHomeless*

(for Goodness sake)



1. Pret's brownie recipe has been revised over 30 times in pursuit of the perfect taste.

2. The company employs only one person for every 14 applicants. Only 19% of its UK workforce were born in this country. Staff turnover is 60% per annum compared to the fast food industry norm of 300-400%.

3. Pret employs mystery shoppers to maintain its standards of service. If one of these declares a shop 'outstanding', all employees get a £1 an hour bonus for every hour they have worked that week (on average, £50).

4. Until 2008, all crayfish used in Pret A Manger salads were supplied by the fish farm owned by The Who's lead singer, Roger Daltrey.

5. The company insists that any disgruntled customers can air their grievances directly with the top management, including co-founder, Julian Metcalfe.

6. 95% of Pret A Manger stores give away unsold produce at the end of the day to the homeless. Although, ironically, the company's name is an anagram of 'enrage tramp'.

*Don't get fooled again. Roger Daltrey has never supplied Pret's crayfish, so number four is a falsehood.

Monocle

While everyone else predicts the death of magazines, Tyler Brûlé goes out and makes them. *Monocle* launched into a world which, supposedly, had moved on permanently from print media and would never tolerate an intelligent mixture of international affairs and fashion. Yet, nearly six years on, it appears to be proving the naysayers wrong. Brûlé also likes radio, another medium whose death has been greatly exaggerated.



MONOCLE

For an object lesson in value creation, cast your eye over *Monocle*. Positioned at the intersection of culture, aesthetics and 'global affairs', in contrast to glossy rivals like *Vogue* and the *FT's How to Spend It*, *Monocle* celebrates a knowing, inconspicuous consumption.

Showcasing thoughtfully designed goods and services from an international community of socially and environmentally sensitive artisans, it's a distinctive take on consumerism cogently expressed by its design.

Cover images set against polished black, elegant serif typefaces and the three-column layout echo the visual authority of the broadsheet press. While its matt paper, realistic photography and charming hand-drawn illustrations delight and flatter the intelligence of an affluent audience, who perhaps, aspire to connect with a less superficial lifestyle.

To its business-travelling, tech-harassed readership, *Monocle* provides a haven of calm, celebrating and sharing indulgent pleasures to be taken at a slower pace. It's only a temporary respite; the addiction to novelty of its always-connected, go-getting readers must also be catered to by streaming Monocle 24 radio over the web.

Yet, we should suppress any latent cynicism. By celebrating human craftsmanship as an antidote to mass production, *Monocle* is profitably evolving a print-based, multichannel business and encouraging the rich to progress beyond shallow materialism by looking at the world through the prism of design. *AK*



Timeline



Monocle Live: Volume 01



Delvaux newspaper bag



Limited-edition print



Moonstar slip-ons



Monocle store, Hong Kong

2007

The name chosen for the title, *The Edit*, was already in use. Founder Tyler Brûlé and creative director Richard Spencer Powell came up with *Monocle*, which sounded suitably old-fashioned and established.

2007

The *Monocle* podcast hit the top of the iTunes podcast chart, overtaking established media brands such as the BBC and *The Economist*.

2007

Monocle's first 'Quality of Life: Most Liveable Cities Index' was published, becoming an annual feature. Zurich was voted top in 2012, based on criteria such as safety and quality of architecture.

2008

The title collaborated with Japanese fashion label Comme des Garçons to create its first fragrance.

2011

Online radio Monocle 24 launched through the Monocle.com website, iTunes and Monocle app.

2012

Monocle celebrated its fifth anniversary with a party in New York attended by the likes of designer Derek Lam, J.Crew chief executive Mickey Drexler and Martha Stewart.

Did you know?

A one-eyed man could spot the lie among the following.*



Monocle store, New York.

1. *Monocle* creator, Tyler Brûlé, was shot by a sniper in Afghanistan in 1994. During his convalescence he came up with the idea for what would become *Wallpaper**.

2. *Monocle's* 2012 'Quality of Life Index' rating the 25 most livable cities in the world doesn't contain a UK entry, while only Portland and San Francisco merit a rating from the mainland US. Unsurprisingly, Switzerland and Scandinavia fare rather better with Zurich grabbing the top spot again. *Monocle's* offices are based in London, however. 'Scandis are a bit too socialist,' Brûlé told *The Guardian*, 'The maternity leave would kill us.'

3. Tyler Brûlé does not tweet.

4. Inspired by a chance encounter in Swiss Air's Heathrow lounge between Brûlé and its club chairman, *Monocle* are now the proud sponsors of Featherstone Rovers rugby league team.

5. *Monocle's* shops in New York, Tokyo and Hong Kong also double as foreign bureaux for the magazine.

6. Satirical blog, Being Tyler Brûlé, pokes fun at the lifestyle of the *Monocle* creator. Here's a sample entry discussing the shortcomings of Scandinavian Airlines' 1st class hospitality: 'Euphemisms will never excuse inferior bubbly. A simple Krug would suffice. After all, what are we – farmers?'

**Monocle* sponsor Featherstone Rovers? Not in this lifetime, making number four the ringer.

Muji

A stripped-down, no-frills, logo-free line of household and clothing essentials that makes a virtue of spending little on marketing or conventional brand-building. Muji has grown from deliberately humble origins into an international retail success story, without compromising its principles of sustainability and simplicity. Whether one can say it is no longer a brand is another question entirely.



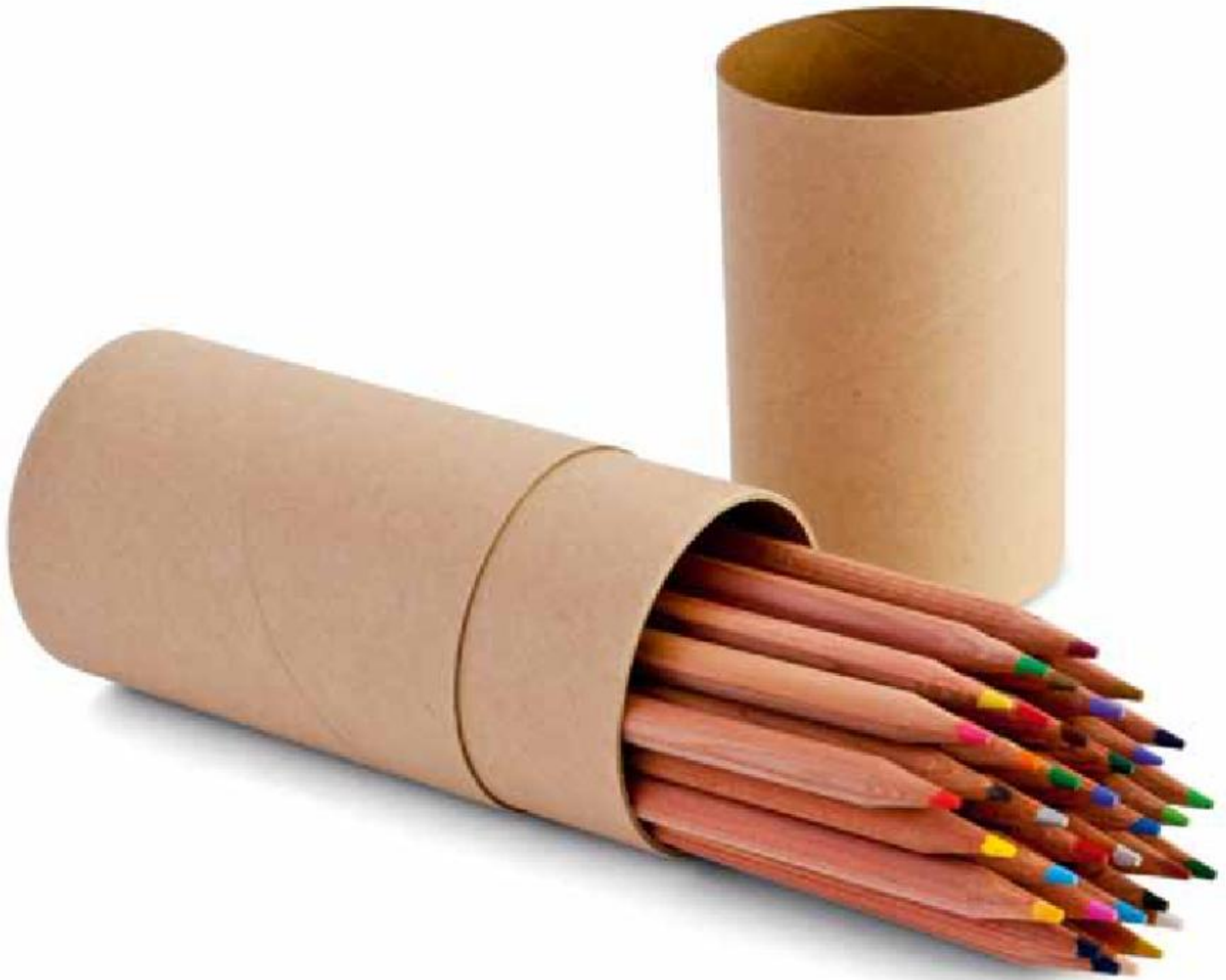
As Leonardo da Vinci said: 'Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.' There is something slightly metaphysical about trying to pin down the branding lessons of 'no-brand' Muji, because, for all it says about not being a brand, it is. There is a coherent, systematic and simple design aesthetic. You can easily picture what a Muji notebook, car or coat would look like – some branding achievement. This simple but stylish approach offers good value to the consumer, as well as savings in production and logistics to the company.

The modesty and calmness of the brand's 'design philosophy' is perhaps distinctive in the West because (against our typically more noisy approach) it speaks softly. Muji shows that an understated approach can have impact.

This philosophy also seems to be strongly held – to the extent of Muji using famous designers, but keeping this information to itself (when broadcasting it would add short-term 'heat').

I wonder how many Western brands would adhere to their design philosophy so strongly, even if it meant missing a business opportunity? For Muji, it seems, inaction speaks louder than words.

To return to the metaphysical question; is a 'no-brand' offer, in its own way, still a brand? Well, Muji was one jump ahead of Naomi Klein with design that's recognisably 'Muji', even if you remove the logo. It understands that design recognition is not skin- or label-deep. Its approach is more holistic. So, for me, it is the purest kind of brand: one that requires no badge to be distinctive. *SA*



Timeline



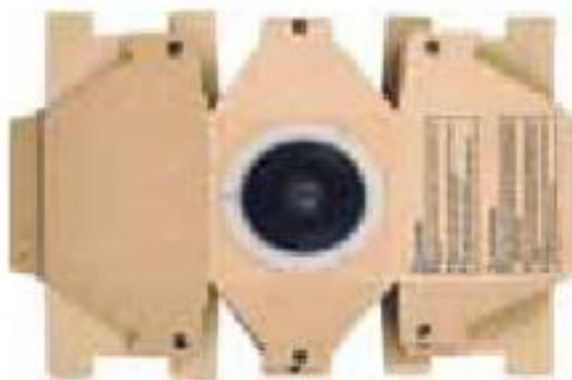
Muji straws



Muji CD Player



Muji store, New York



Muji cardboard speakers



Muji penguin skittles set

1983

The first standalone Muji shop opened in the Aoyama area of Japan.

1989

Muji transferred from original supermarket owner Seiyu to new company Ryohin Keikaku.

1998

Ryohin Keikaku listed on the second section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange. From 2001 it moved into the first section.

2002

Expanding into the US, Muji was stocked in the gift shop of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Its wall mounted CD player also appears in MOMA's art collection.

2010

Muji celebrated its 30th anniversary.

2011

The first Muji in Aoyama reopened as a concept store called Found Muji Aoyama, featuring products from different cultures around the world.

Did you know?

One of the following facts has embraced a minimalist approach to the truth.*



1. When Muji launched, *The Face* magazine likened it to 'a kind of funky Marks & Spencer'.

2. Muji customers can help shape the direction the company takes. Mujinet encourages customers to be involved in the consultation process for a range of products.

3. Muji has produced a T-Shirt with a rubber stamp on the chest which allows purchasers to create their own message.

4. In summer 2012, Muji held a lottery in which the winner will live rent-free for two years in a two-bedroom, Muji-built house in Mitaka, Tokyo. The house will be furnished and stocked exclusively with Muji products.

5. Every year Muji releases one limited-edition product with no defined title or role and invites customers to suggest what they use it for.

6. Muji itself expressed its philosophy thus: 'We would like our customers to feel the rational sense of satisfaction that comes not with, this is the best, but, this is enough. Best becomes enough.'

Sailor Jerry

Not all of adman Steven Grasse's ideas would find favour with every client – his use of serial killers to promote a clothing store in Philadelphia was one to divide opinion. But Sailor Jerry was an inspired way to launch a brand and reinvigorate a moribund area of the drinks industry. That it also spread the legend of the tattoo artist formerly known as Norman Collins to a new and wide audience was a very welcome benefit.



The first lesson from Sailor Jerry's success should be burned into the chip of all would-be innovators: challenge the assumptions.

While most distillers chased growth in white spirits, founder Steven Grasse put his energy into dark rum, just as the big money moved out.

However, it was the former ad agency-owner's creative flair for branding and communication that make Sailor Jerry a true champion.

And the foundations for its long-term success were laid by meticulous design.

As a matelot-turned tattoo artist had lent his nickname to the brand, the branding should evoke his story. A traditional whisky-style bottle with a striking seafarer's tattoo design on its label catches the eye and nails its proposition as a brand for those who are not slaves to fashion.

Distribution in bars frequented by nonconformists and association with musicians outside the mainstream quickly brought Sailor Jerry enthusiastic converts more powerfully than mainstream advertising ever could.

Sailor Jerry is a sobering reminder of what creativity can achieve when set free. It's something smart organisations like William Grant & Sons appreciate, as they supplement internal innovation programmes with acquisitions from the unconventional pioneers rarely to be found within the corporate world. *AK*



Timeline



Sailor Jerry 'Rise and Shine'



'A Sailor's Grave Art Show'



Centennial celebration bottles



Converse All Star Sailor Jerry

1911

Norman Collins was born in California. He learned the art of machine tattooing from another legend, Gib 'Tatts' Thomas, in Chicago.

1930s

Collins adopted the nickname Hori Smoku. Hori means 'to carve' and is a traditional surname of Japanese tattoo masters.

1973

Following Collins' death, the legacy of Sailor Jerry, including his Honolulu tattoo parlour and tattoo designs, was acquired by fellow artists Don Ed Hardy and Mike Malone.

1999

Steven Grasse, president of Philadelphia ad agency Quaker City Mercantile, acquired the rights to Sailor Jerry's legacy from Hardy and Malone.

2008

UK distillery William Grant & Sons bought all rights to the Sailor Jerry brand name.

Did you know?

One of these is tattoo good to be true.*



1. Norman Collins earned the 'Jerry' part of his nickname from his father, who noticed a stubborn side to his son's character. Hence, he was known as Jerry as that was the name of the family mule.

2. While living in Hawaii, Sailor Jerry had a talk radio programme called *Old Ironsides Hour* broadcast on KGRT Honolulu, during which he liked to recite poetry.

3. The business cards which Sailor Jerry carried with him, simply read, 'My Work Speaks For Itself.'

4. After becoming friends with Gene Kelly, Sailor Jerry took a brief non-speaking role in the musical, *On The Town*.

5. As well as launching the Sailor Jerry brand, adman Steven Grasse has written a book entitled, *The Evil Empire: 101 Ways that England Ruined the World*.

6. Due to a dispute with the IRS, Sailor Jerry made no tattoos from his 20s to his late 50s. He only tattooed for 12 years of his life.

*There was no friendship between Sailor Jerry and Gene Kelly, thus no walk-on part in *On The Town*. Therefore, four is a fib.

Cohiba

It's an irony regularly noted that a symbol of the Cuban revolution should be synonymous with success and excess in a country where it's banned. The US might have done all in its power to kill Castro and his revolution, but by banning Cuban imports, it's only succeeded in feeding the legend of Cohiba – ensuring it is regarded as the gold standard in the cigar world.



Such an eye-catching, confident little design; monochromatic milling atop a bright yellow ground, an austere logotype relieved only by the humanity of the Taíno Indian cameo. For luxury cigars costing £25 apiece, it appears to say very little – yet what a story it can tell.

It was created in 1966, a year etched on our national consciousness by sporting success, when off the Florida coast an altogether more ideological battle was being fought. Having initially monopolised this special cigar, once Castro had decreed Cohiba should henceforth be available to all, he allegedly designed the packaging himself – and by so doing betrayed the passion of an iconoclast.

By its spare, industrial nature, the design is the antithesis of the overdecorated, quasi-religious regalia of its predecessors. No gold foil, no medals, no sepia images, no Biblical metaphors.

It confidently symbolised the values of the new era, the triumph of the socialist movement, the rejection of traditional authorities of church and state. In the process, it rendered capitalist Cuban cigar brands somehow alien.

If the political lesson to be drawn from Cohiba is that even humble packaging can be a catalyst for social change, perhaps the business lesson is that, should you wish to foment a revolution, brave design is your first weapon. *AK*



Timeline



Cohiba logo



Fidel Castro in his cigar smoking days



Cohiba Robustos



Cohiba cigarettes



Behike limited-edition box

1966

The Cohiba cigar was created.

1972

The Cohiba trademark was registered in Cuba. Later, it was trademarked in 115 other countries, excluding the US.

1982

Cohiba cigars became available outside Cuba for the first time.

1986

Cohiba's biggest fan, Fidel Castro, gave up smoking.

1990

Cohiba manufacturer Habanos' first international retail outlet, La Casa Del Habano, opened in Cancún, Mexico.

2006

The limited-edition Cohiba Behike went on sale, priced £233. It was billed as the most expensive cigar ever made.

2011

Habanos' total sales, including Cohiba, hit £228m.

Did you know?

One of these facts smoked once but did not inhale.*



1. When Cohiba cigars were exported for the first time from Cuba in 1982 they were only available in three sizes: the Panetela, the Corona Especial (Fidel's stogie of choice) and the Lancero. In 1989, three more sizes were added: the Robusto, the Exquisito and the Espléndido.

2. The man who is said to have rolled the first Cohiba is Avelino Lara. He was the first director of the El Laguito factory where Cohibas were made. He was recognised as one of the industry's experts before he passed away in 2009 at the age of 88.

3. All Cohiba cigars are rolled between the thighs of virgins.

4. The tobacco for Cohiba cigars comes from the heart of the Vuelta Abajo, about 100 miles southwest of Havana. Plantations near the towns of San Juan y Martinez and San Luiz are the most frequently used suppliers, but their exact location is a closely guarded secret.

5. The biggest export markets for Cuban cigars in general, and Cohiba in particular, are France, Spain and then China.

6. The Cohiba cigar has become a staple of the rap lifestyle and is namechecked in numerous songs, notably Lil Wayne's 'Hustler Musik' which features the line, 'Got me feeling like Scarface/Light the Cohiba.'

*Number three is also a long-standing myth, predating the Cohiba. It supposedly stems from a creative journalist's visit to a Cuban cigar factory in the 1940s, where he saw women with tobacco leaves on their laps and got slightly over-excited.

Chanel No 5

Rarely can a product have established a stronger link with luxury and glamour than that enjoyed by this French scent. Its twin associations with haute couture and Hollywood's A-list continue to ensure its leading position in the perfume market nearly a century after its launch, while its almost unchanging packaging and design make it as pleasing on the eye as it is on the nose.



What can we learn from this? What can't we?!

No 5's design epitomises the holy grail of 'timeless classic'. With its understated, form-follows-function glass bottle, sensitively embellished with an oversized stopper and undersized seal, Chanel sets the standard for the exercise of restraint.

In perfect harmony, the elegance of the mirrored 'C' hallmark and its seamless connection to a simple, bold 'CHANEL' elevate No 5 to a thing of such beauty it 'feels like winning the lottery' to possess one. It has also provided inspiration to students of design for four generations.

Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication, but great design, no matter how seductive, cannot be responsible for such commercial success by itself.

Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel may have created the first designer fragrance, but she wasn't just a pretty face. From the discreet seeding of the product among elite customers of her clothing boutiques, to the

carefully controlled distribution and enrolment of enthusiastic sales assistants to her cause, her work on No 5 is a text-book example of building a luxury brand by word of mouth, managing supply just behind demand – a case of using pull rather than push.

To thrive in the novelty-obsessed fragrance market for a decade is to be considered a survivor; to do so for 90 years, however, makes No 5 a rare breed indeed. *AK*

N°5



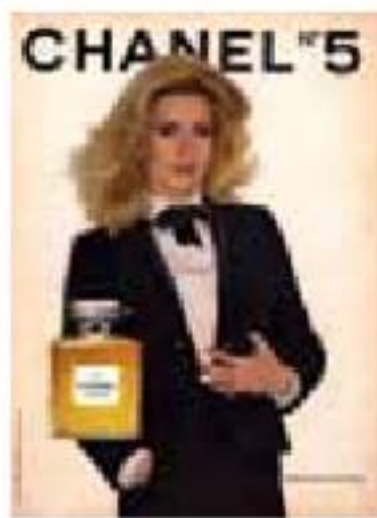
Timeline



Vintage Chanel No 5 advertising



Elizabeth Taylor for Chanel No 5, 1960s



Catherine Deneuve for Chanel No 5, 1970s



The Secret of Chanel No 5, 2010



Brad Pitt for Chanel No 5, 2012

1910

Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel set up a millinery boutique, Chanel Modes.

1921

Ernest Beaux presented her with a choice of a series of fragrances, numbered from one to five and 20 to 24. She picked No 5.

1924

The company was renamed 'Parfums Chanel' when Chanel entered a partnership with the Wertheimer brothers.

1934

The more affordable flacon container was released to engage with the middle-class market.

1954

Marilyn Monroe said that all she wore to bed was Chanel No 5, subsequently boosting sales.

1959

A bottle of Chanel No 5 was included in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

2012

Brad Pitt was named the new face of Chanel No 5, the first time a man has represented the fragrance.

Did you know?

One of these should make you smell a rat.*

Estella Warren for Chanel No 5, 2001.



1. As an orphan, raised in a convent by nuns, Coco Chanel was taught to attach great significance to the number 5, which assumed mystical meaning for her. She always aimed to release her new dress collections on the 5th of May.

2. At the end of World War II, worried about her alleged collaboration with the Nazis, Coco Chanel offered a free bottle of Chanel No 5 to all American GIs.

3. Chanel No 5 is known within the perfume industry as 'le monstre'. A bottle of it is sold every 30 seconds.

4. The perfume was recreated from a scent known as 'le bouquet de Catherine' which had been made to celebrate a Romanov party in Russia in 1914.

5. When Channel 5 launched in 1997, it was forced to change its original ident which was judged to be too similar to the Chanel No 5 logo.

6. The perfume's creator, Ernest Beaux, said that he wanted Chanel No 5 to evoke the smell of snow and lichen in the Arctic where he spent the final months of World War I.

*Number five (what else?) is a knock-off.

Jif

There's something faintly absurd about placing artificial lemon juice in a container that's almost mistakably like a real lemon. No less odd is Jif's continuing success when no chef in the land would recommend using artificial lemon juice rather than the real thing. It's a simple design classic, a store cupboard staple that gets one chance to shine every year and never fluffs its lines.



For all its curviness, the design of Jif draws the straightest possible line from product to packaging.

One lesson that we can take from Jif is that being obvious and direct is actually very powerful – the visual economy of packaging lemon juice in a lemon-shaped vessel gives it charm. It also shortcuts any requirement from the busy shopper to work out what this brand is selling. No need for superfluous words or graphics. Can you think of any other packaging that makes the contents so immediately clear?

The purity of this idea, though, exposed the brand to imitation and costly litigation. Perhaps adding one 'twist' to the lemon design might have turned an obvious idea into a more distinctive (and protectable) brand? One could argue that the pack is a novelty and has limited its relevance to Pancake Day alone. Yet, as one-offs go, it is still some design – making your brand synonymous with a national event is quite an achievement.

Jif is one of surprisingly few packaging classics to straightforwardly borrow from nature. Generally, it seems we prefer our packaging to adapt or depart from the natural world. The fact a real lemon is also pretty cheap (and is a hard design to improve on) suggests nature is a high benchmark to compete with. Perhaps, though, we might all aim to be a little more obvious and direct, like Jif? SA



Jif
REAL LEMON JUICE

Facts



Jif Lemon



Advertising, 1970s



Jif Lemon miniature truck



Your 101 Best Jif Lemon Recipes, 1980



Advertising, 1990s

\$250m

The price that Unilever bought Reckitt & Coleman's food brands for in 1995, including the Jif Lemon brand.

3,099,216

The number of Jif Lemons sold in 2011.

71%

The percentage of Jif Lemon's annual sales made over the Pancake Day period.

35

Jif Lemon's ranking in *Marketing's* 'Adwatch of the Decade', measuring the most memorable ads of the 1990s.

273

The shelf-life of a Jif Lemon measured in days.

Did you know?

One of the following lemon entries is not true, my dear Watson.*

Advertising, 1966.



1. The makers of Jif became embroiled in a lengthy, and eventually successful, court case to prevent the American company Borden selling a similar product in Britain. The court case would have been a lot simpler had Jif been able to register its lemon as a trademark. However, because it so closely resembles a real lemon, it was unable to do so as that would have prevented others from using the symbol of a lemon to sell lemons or lemon juice.

2. Two tablespoons of Jif Lemon juice are equivalent to the juice from one medium lemon.

3. George Melly, the late jazz singer, always kept a bowl of Jif Lemons in the foyer of his London flat.

4. Jif Lemon designer, Bill Pugh, had previously enjoyed success with a pink plastic teddy bear for dispensing Vinolia baby powder. He later worked on refining the look of Action Man and designed dashboard air vents for Rolls Royce which became industry standard.

5. In the run-up to Shrove Tuesday, 1985, Jif launched its most successful ad campaign with the tag line, 'Don't forget the pancakes on Jif Lemon Day.'

6. Blue Peter regularly used Jif Lemon containers in their craft projects, most memorably as a rather bijou money box.

*The wrong 'un is number three. George Melly did many crazy things, but not this.

Hunter

A gaggle of girls in distressed denim shorts and Hunters at Glastonbury. It's as emblematic of British summertime as celebs on Centre Court or moaning about A-levels. Strange that a company which made its name on the battlefields of World War I should have had its crucial leg-up courtesy of Kate Moss and a ploughed field much closer to home.



Can you name another brand of wellies? On the surface, Hunter boots are just like any others, so how has the brand found itself in a league of its own? The answer is that in design, a little can go a long way.

As an agency, we preach about distinctiveness. Yet the only things that distinguish Hunter's core product from its competitors are the logo and, arguably, the buckle – though even that seems to come as standard nowadays. There are some subtle differences to the boot's shape and tread, but the secret to Hunter's success is that the quality is known, not shown. The logo is basic and utilitarian. It simply tells you that the boots will do the job and keep the water out.

The beauty of such a plain badge is that it's enabled the brand to have a chameleon-like versatility. While its roots are definitely in the country, the brand now branches into a much

broader market – as the fuchsia boot with a gloss finish would suggest. Royal crests have long reassured us about quality, but it was fashion royalty who convinced us that Hunter wasn't just for the farm.

A steady stream of new collections and collaborations with different designers demonstrate a willingness to experiment around the edges. Hunter successfully brings fashion to an inherently unfashionable category. It is, however, the design discipline at the brand's core that should ensure Hunter doesn't slip up any time soon. //



Timeline



Classic Hunters with socks



Hunter & RHS, 2007



Hunter & Water Aid, 2008



Hunter & Jimmy Choo, 2009



Hunter Union Jack edition, 2012

1817

The Duke of Wellington asked his shoemaker to create a boot. The mid-calf leather footwear became known as the Wellington boot.

1918

By the end of World War I, the North British Rubber Company had produced more than 1.18 million pairs of boots for soldiers. Shoe production ran 24 hours a day.

1955

The green Hunter boot was created, featuring a more ergonomic design. Sales were slow, but the style would later become a classic and is now known as the original Hunter.

2005

The 50th anniversary of the Hunter was celebrated with a limited-edition range of seven brightly coloured boots, with proceeds going to seven charities.

2008

The headquarters of the business moved from Dumfries back to Edinburgh, the original home of the North British Rubber Company.

2010

David Cameron bought pink and purple pairs of Hunter boots for his US trip, as gifts for Barack Obama's daughters.

Did you know?

More chance of seeing Kate Moss in Evans than finding truth in one of these.*

The Queen (1967) & Kate Moss (2011) in Hunters.



1. The North British Rubber Company which originally manufactured Hunter wellingtons also produced golf balls until 1978.

2. Commenting on the green welly phenomenon which took hold in the 1980s after Lady Diana was seen wearing a pair of Hunters, the *Sloane Ranger Handbook* author, Peter York noted, 'London Sloanes sprout green wellies in wet weather like a plague of frogs.'

3. Hunter lost £300,000 on sales of £4.3m in 2006, but four years later made £16m profit on sales of £56m.

4. As well as Kate Moss famously endorsing the brand at Glastonbury, Hunter received a further boost when Peter Mandelson was seen wearing a pair of its costly French rival's, Le Chameau.

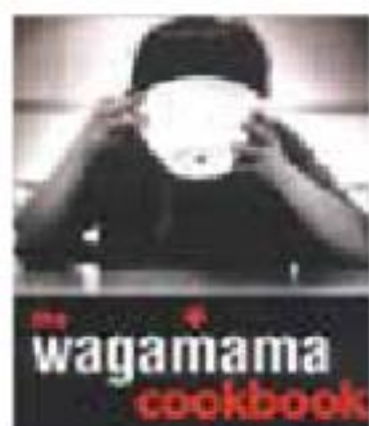
5. Hunter's plans to launch a range of 'Nimrod' boots in the US were swiftly curtailed when the company learnt of the word's pejorative associations in the States.

6. Hunters feature prominently in the British sport of 'welly-wanging'. The world record for throwing a wellington boot is 69 yards, two feet and 10.89 inches (all measurements have to be imperial). While the maximum run-up allowed is 42 paces, in tribute to the late Douglas Adams who was a keen proponent of the sport.

*Fans of the truth should give number five the boot.

Wagamama

While Wagamama can take credit for giving most people in this country their first taste of ramen noodles, it achieved something far more revolutionary when it sold the British people the profoundly unsettling notion of sitting down to consume a meal next to strangers. For this sea change in our eating habits – along with speedy, PDA-driven service and steaming bowls of tasty goodness (quietly consumed to avoid the glare of that unfriendly person next to us) – we salute it!



The best ideas always appear obvious in retrospect. It's now plain to see that there was a glaring gap in the market for a contemporary Asian restaurant brand. Traditional Chinese has long been an important dish in our cuisine and only Indian would be considered more 'British'.

But the red and gold signage, dragons, lanterns and calligraphy represent the China of old. Wagamama, on the other hand, provides a taste of what's to come; an appetiser for the dynamic new Asia that we're all now struggling to keep up with.

The Asian economies have rewritten the rules in pursuit of economic growth – Wagamama has done the same with restaurant design. Convention went in the bin: you share a table with strangers, the menu is printed on paper not bound in leather, the kitchen is in full view and your food arrives when it's cooked, not at the same time as your fellow diners' meal.

Secretly, we all recognise these as the ingredients of a model driven by efficiency, but they are served up in such a way that they feel like virtues rather than sacrifices. They create a more casual and egalitarian dining experience that looks to the future, not the past.

The minimalist approach also has the effect of making the food feel simple and, by implication, more healthy. US fast-food chains conquered the world, but they've never convinced on quality. No wonder Wagamama's star is rising. //



Timeline



Wagamama signage



Wagamama ramen noodles



Wagamama sauces



Wagamama app



Wagamama menu

1992

Alan Yau set up Wagamama (the name means 'naughty child' in Japanese); the first restaurant was in Bloomsbury, London.

2000

Manchester became the first location for a UK Wagamama outside the capital.

2005

A majority stake in Wagamama was sold to private equity firm Lion Capital, owners of Jimmy Choo and, until recently, cereal brand Weetabix, for £102.5m.

2005

The chain's 50th restaurant opened at London's Royal Festival Hall.

2006

Wagamama was named most popular London restaurant by *Zagat* ahead of The Ivy and Le Gavroche.

2010

A Wagamama app was introduced, offering customers the ability to place takeaway orders.

2011

Lion Capital sold its stake in the business to Duke Street.

Did you know?

'Waiter! Waiter! There's a fly in my truth.'*



1. In 2008, Wagamama won the Evolution trophy at the Peach Factory awards for established businesses that continue to evolve successfully. It was described by judges as, 'a textbook case study of how to handle growth.'

2. When a restaurant opened in London in 1995 under the name, Rajamama, the owners of Wagamama successfully sued its owners, City Centre Restaurants, for passing off.

3. Tracey Emin once paid for an evening meal at a City of London Wagamama with a sketch drawn on the back of one of its menus. The drawing is now framed and hangs on the wall of Wagamama at Old Broad Street.

4. Although 'wagamama' can be translated as 'naughty child', it has wider uses in the Japanese language and can be applied to adults to mean, 'self-indulgent' or worse, 'selfish, egocentric, insistent on having one's own way.'

5. When Alan Yau launched Wagamama, he and his father provided 60% of the £500,000 it required.

6. Since selling the Wagamama chain in 1998, its creator Alan Yau has never eaten there nor set foot in one of its restaurants. 'The past is the past,' he has said. 'It's like, would you have dinner with one of your ex-girlfriends?'

*The Tracey Emin sketch/meal transaction is pure fabrication. Number three is misleading to say the least.

Mulberry

If the rest of the British economy had fared half as well as Mulberry in 2012, George Osborne would have spent the summer performing multiple laps of honour at the Olympic Stadium rather than being roundly booed. In the face of near universal economic gloom, the luxury goods brand has defied all forecasts and seen its shares soar on the strength of a handful of impossibly desirable handbags. A far cry from its humble origins in early 70s' Somerset.



Mulberry, the darling of the 2012 London Fashion Week, seems to be finally following Burberry's lead and cashing in on the booming luxury-goods market.

Mulberry is an exceptional maker of hand-tooled leather, yet it has taken almost half a century to develop a winning strategy. It's easy to see why from the outside. Mulberry overlooked a fundamental point – in designer brands, it's all about the design, stupid.

Perhaps its classic stippled finish was too narrow in appeal, or perhaps accessories are just too niche a market to sustain prime retail rents. Either way, after nearly sinking in the late 90s, Mulberry had to retrench and reinvent, importing star talent to help it craft a wider appeal. (Note to the financial director; in design-driven markets, never scrimp on the talent. Creativity is your best strategy.)

Cleverly marrying the brand's hunting, shooting and fishing heritage with the bold colours and playful decoration now loved by young, glamour-seeking consumers, a succession of creative directors have since crafted signature pieces. These include the Bayswater and Alexa bags, transforming Mulberry from problem child to fashion royalty in less than a decade.

Although ownership of the company was wrested from founder Roger Saul, at least the Eastern connections offered by current controlling shareholder, Christina Ong, mean Mulberry should continue to fly the flag for British design in the years to come. *AK*

Alexa Chung sporting the Alexa bag.



Timeline



Bayswater



Roxanne



Taylor satchel



Tassel bag



Del Rey

1971

Roger Saul began making leather goods from his Somerset home. A factory was soon set up in Shepton Mallett and local craftsmen were hired as the business grew.

1998

Mulberry expanded its presence in Japan and entered the Middle East market with stores in Bahrain, Kuwait and Lebanon.

2000

Fashion mogul Christina Ong bought 42% of the company for a reported £7.6m.

2001

The company returns to profitability. A year later however, it made a loss again and Saul was ousted as chairman. He sold his remaining stake and stepped down as president in 2003.

2005

Mulberry won the accessory designer of the year award from the British Fashion Council.

2011

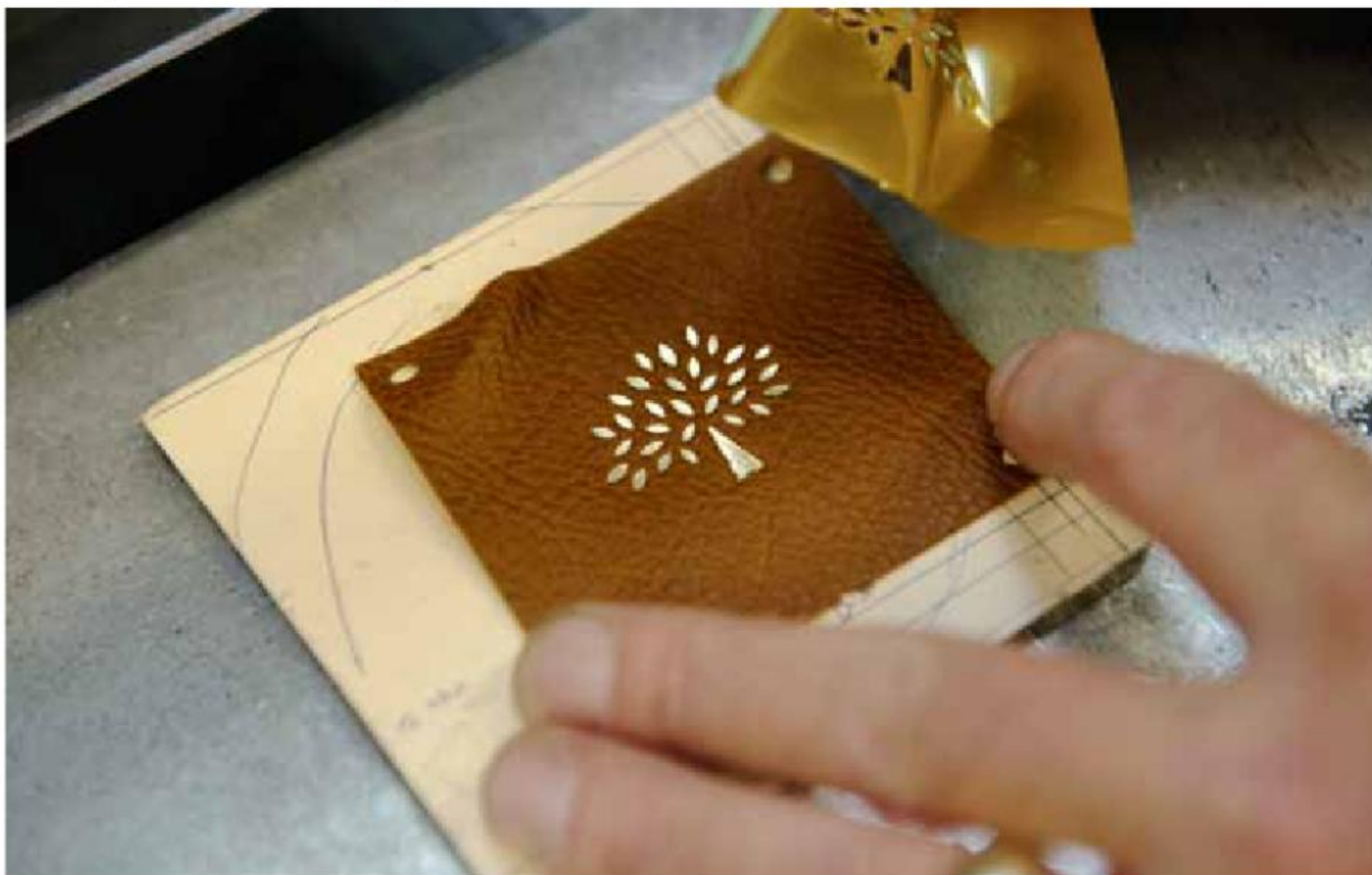
The company was valued at the £1bn mark after its stock rose significantly.

2012

The latest Mulberry must-have accessory, the Del Rey bag, was unveiled, named after singer Lana Del Rey.

Did you know?

An interloper has muscled its way into this front row of truth.*



1. In 2001, Anna Friel and her then partner, David Thewlis, were paid a reported £50,000 to front a Mulberry advertising campaign.

2. When Mulberry founder, Roger Saul, was ousted from the company in 2003 he was forced to sell his 38% share for £7.2m. Less than a decade later the same shares were worth £399m.

3. Anyone holding 500 or more Mulberry shares is entitled to a 20% discount at the store.

4. The idea for launching the Alexa, the £750 bag most responsible for transforming the company's fortunes, came when the company designers saw a photo of Alexa Chung carrying an Elkington, Mulberry's classic briefcase.

5. At Mulberry's Spring 2012 show, a black poodle modelled a jacquard peacoat.

6. Mulberry's current resurgence has not been hindered by the Duchess of Cambridge regularly being seen either wearing or carrying its products.

*Mulberry five doesn't belong. The peacoat-wearing poodle was seen at the Spring 2012 show.

Tunnock's

With the possible exception of Irn-Bru, no product has a stronger association with northern Britain than Tunnock's and its self-styled Tea Cakes. Its unchanging packaging and its frugal approach to finance (the family-run company carries no debt) play up to our preconceptions about canny Scottish business practices, as does its refusal to give house room to management consultants. For millions it represents the ultimate in comfort food and it's wise enough to know that this is an attribute which money can't buy.



Tunnock's is a classic case of design that has remained 'unspoiled by progress'. Its charm lies in an uncontrived retro feel. In a competitive environment that is glossy, Photoshopped and up-to-the minute, Tunnock's jumps out for its almost crudely bold graphic nature – the dynamic pattern of stripes sings on the shelf. The basic typography, punchy colours and quirky equities, such as the flag-bearing lion and the star on the marshmallows, all contribute to it looking like the real deal. If you set out to do a pastiche of this style, you would never pull off something so idiosyncratic and singular.

The charming yellow display boxes featuring the chubby-cheeked schoolboy would probably never pass muster now amid associations with childhood obesity. Happily, they were created in a less uptight age. The folk at Tunnock's are no fools; they know that not monkeying around with old visual ingredients is what gives their brand its appeal.

When we unwrap one of Tunnock's cakes or biscuits we are also unwrapping associations with happier, simpler times. It is the perfect brand for the 'Keep calm' era, which is why its distinctive stripy iconography is now applied to trendy ceramics, cushions and suchlike.

The graphics also pass a crucial test of a brand's visual robustness. Even if you crumple it up, there is no mistaking the packaging for any other brand. It really is design of a fine vintage. SA



Timeline



Tunnock's boy



Tunnock's Caramel Wafer



Tunnock's van



Tunnock's Snowballs



Tunnock's tote bag, Gillian Kyle



Tunnock's Mini Caramel Wafers

1865

Thomas Tunnock was born in Uddingston, Scotland.

1910

Encouraged by his bakery's success, Tunnock opened a tea room.

1912

The bakery was destroyed by a fire, but re-established in a different location within two years.

1920

Thomas Tunnock died while his son, Archie, was serving in the Army. He took over the family business on his return.

1986

Poet Laureate Ted Hughes penned a verse on the back of a caramel wafer wrapper. It was later sold at auction for £575.

1987

Boyd Tunnock was awarded an MBE for his work exporting to foreign countries. He later received a CBE for his charity work.

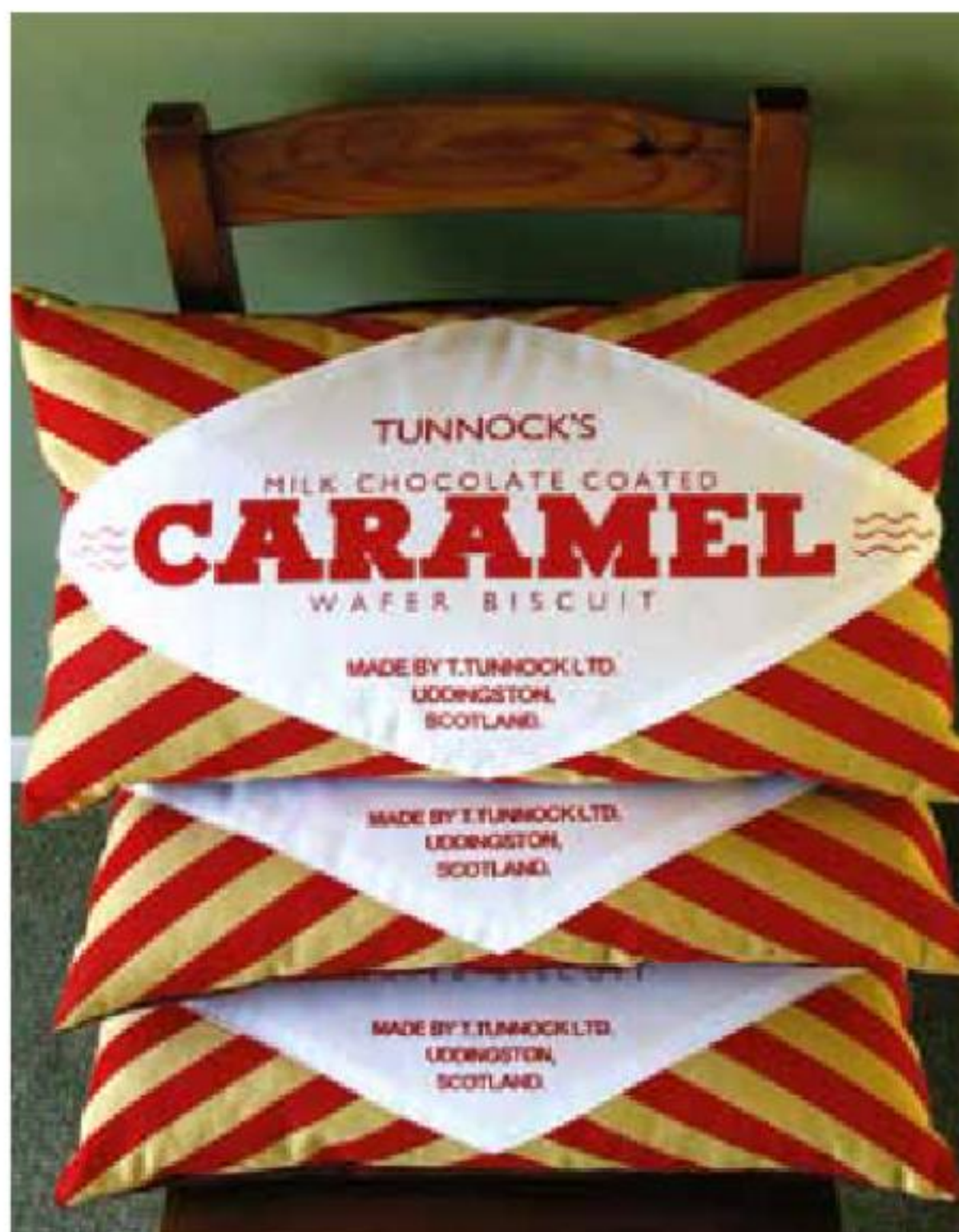
2000s

Exports continued with new markets in Ghana, Denmark, Singapore and Egypt.

Did you know?

One of these is half-baked.*

Image courtesy of Nikki McWilliams Ltd.



1. At Gordon Brown's wedding reception in August 2000, all guests were greeted with a cup of tea and a Tunnock's Caramel Wafer.

2. Tunnock's Uddingston factory produces 350 tea cakes a minute. Employees work from Monday to Friday, on either one of two day shifts, or the shorter night shift.

3. In 2006, the company negotiated a deal with ITV soap, *Emmerdale*, for Tunnock's products to be stocked in the village shop.

4. The firm has a year-long waiting list for tours of the factory, such is its popularity. 10,000 visitors per year make the pilgrimage to Uddingston.

5. Tunnock's Wafers don't carry a sell-by date.

6. St Andrew's University boasts a Tunnock's Caramel Wafer Appreciation Society which has been in existence for almost 30 years.

*The catering arrangements at the Brown nuptials did not, to the best of our knowledge, feature any Tunnock's produce. Number one is found fraudulent.

Howies

If ever a company supplied a dictionary definition of 'punching above one's weight', it is surely Howies. Aside from finding a small, but passionate group of consumers, the little organic clothes manufacturer's genius is its ability to wield influence. Howies disseminates its message with the kind of disproportionate effectiveness that companies ten times its size must envy. Unsurprising perhaps, given the marketing background of its two founders, but impressive nonetheless.



Look up 'design' in the OED. It can mean: '1. A preliminary plan, sketch, or concept, for the making or production of a building, machine, garment, etc. 2. The art of producing these.'

By this definition Howies is a design champion. More than most, it considers its materials and production. It's a thoughtful brand. It goes for triple rather than double-stitching on jeans. It chooses organic cotton because it's kinder to your skin. It is happy to charge a little more for a little better.

In garment retail there's often less than meets the eye to successful brands. Conversely, Howies apparently considers substance first, then thinks a little about the style. Rather than blandly meaning nothing much to a huge target audience, it has elected to mean something in particular to a more selective group of people.

To my mind it is kind of a sportier, spikier (more adult?) take on the Innocent Drinks vibe. It talks about materials 'designed by nature', such as Merino wool that 'will never, ever stink...no matter how much you sweat in it'. Having a point of view gives Howies clarity in determining what its product, styling and communication approach can be. As such, all these elements complement one another and become greater than the sum of their parts.

It comes down to the consideration with which Howies put things together, in spirit and in manufacture. That is not always the case with 'designer' quality, as opposed to quality design. SA

These are the days. They always were

howies®



Timeline



Howies hoody



Lozenge bag



'Rest Less' Tour de France T-Shirts, 2012



Timbuk2 bag



Frednik Western shirt

1995

Clare and David Hiatt set up the Howies clothing range producing four T-Shirts in their London flat as a break from their marketing day jobs.

2000

The company decided to sell by mail order as demand for Howies products grew. David Hiatt left ad agency Abbott Mead Vickers to run the company full time. No other full-time staff were employed.

2001

Howies moved to Cardigan, Wales, with two full-time staff.

2003

Turnover stood at £160,000, with Howies products sold in 70 shops across the UK. The website Howies.co.uk was relaunched, with an active blog devoted to musings on sport and the environment.

2005

Howies began using ethical bank Triodos.

2008

Howies was named sixth-most recession-proof company by the *Financial Times*.

Did you know?

There is no place on the runway of truth for one of these models.*



1. In 2012, David and Clare Hieatt launched the Hiut Denim Company in Cardigan. Each pair of jeans they manufacture will come with an app called History Tag. It will tell the individual story of the jeans from the sourcing of the denim to final production. Customers will then be able to upload significant pictures onto the app to provide a complete history of the jeans. It's hoped it will encourage sustainability and emphasise their longevity.

2. On returning to Wales, Howies launched the 'Cardigan cardigan', but was unable to sustain the quality of its wool supply and quickly discontinued it.

3. Howies was forced to close its one store in London on Christmas Eve, 2011, blaming a demand for a 30% increase in rent from its landlords.

4. The company has a list of 'Stuff We Believe In' on which the final item reads: 'And we believe tea should always be made in a pot.'

5. Howies takes its name from a corruption of co-founder Clare Hieatt's maiden name of Howells.

6. In 2008, David Hieatt founded the 'Do Lectures'. They're billed as 'talks that inspire action' and likened to a 'Glastonbury for the mind' where successful entrepreneurs show others how to put ideas into action. Held in April at Parc y Pratt Farm in Cardigan, they now have a sister event in the US in September.

*No Cardigan cardigan was ever manufactured by Howies, making number two untrue. But the stuff about tea in a pot is both true and right.

Dr Martens

Even before Paul Weller sang of Dr Martens' 'Apocalypse', the air-sprung footwear occupied a central role in the cultural history of this country. Worn by skinheads, mods, punks, ska revivalists and later fans of grunge, these boots have moved from being a working man's wardrobe staple to a universal symbol of youth culture; capable of meaning all things to all men (and women). Production might have largely shifted from these shores, but the influence will endure.



Why do some designs achieve ubiquitous popularity and an aura of enduring cool? I think Dr Martens' design success is all about the engineering, not the style. Bouncing around at gigs, kicking in foes or doing the Nutty Dance is so much easier on the feet because of those wonderfully springy soles.

Tactility is supposedly our least consciously noticed, but most persuasive, sense – it's the first one we develop as infants. So those forgiving soles are probably a much more important brand equity than the yellow stitching, the 'Air Wair' cloth tabs flapping off the back of the ankle, or the amount of lace-eyelets one chooses. Design is much more than a surface thing.

The key designs are classics because they have not been tinkered with. Of course, relevance is all, so the brand can boast a '2012 collection' that is

a bit more Agyness Deyn than Pete Townshend. Youth cult brands might come and go, but such endeavours are all grist to Dr Martens' continuing vitality, between patches where anyone and everyone wears them again.

Certain designs catch on because they are of affordable high quality, whether you are a punk or the prime minister. Of their kind, you can't get better than Docs and any fashion frippery cannot improve on the basic template – that is design (not styling) of some genius. SA



Timeline



The Who's Pete Townshend, 1960s



Sex Pistols, 1970s



The Clash, 1970s



Madness, 1970s



Blur, 1990s

1901

The Griggs family established a boot-making business in Northampton. Bill Griggs acquired the rights to manufacture Dr Martens boots in the late 50s.

1960

The first 1460-style Dr Martens boot was produced, rolling off the line on 1 April (hence the style name).

1999

Production reached its peak at 10 million pairs a year.

2003

All production was outsourced to China and Thailand; UK manufacture of Dr Martens ceased. However, production of some vintage styles returned to the UK four years later.

2011

Dr Martens' owner, the still family-run R Griggs Group, announced record revenues of £110.2m, with 42% of sales in the US.

2012

R Griggs Group put the Dr Martens brand up for sale with a reported price-tag of £120m.

Did you know?

One of these facts has been doctored.*

Archive image courtesy of Gavin Watson, campaign photographer for Dr Martens.



1. Early prototypes of the boot, which were produced in 1945 by Dr Klaus Maertens and his friend Dr Herbert Funck, used reclaimed rubber from Luftwaffe airfields. Thus, boots which have been worn by youth cultures of both left and right, can claim a lineage stretching back to the defeat of fascism.

2. Reflecting its popularity with women, in the 1990s Dr Martens introduced a bridal version of the boot in gold with white laces.

3. Elton John gave the brand a massive boost when he wore a giant pair of Docs in the 1975 film of Pete Townshend's rock opera, *Tommy*. Despite having to wear foot-long calipers in order to walk in the boots, Elton (The Pinball Wizard) made sure he kept the pair after filming finished. They were last seen in Northampton Museum & Art Gallery.

4. In 1986, Ben Elton provoked over 500 complaints to Channel 4 for joking that Dr Martens 'are as British as the Queen – another old boot with German origins'.

5. After Alex DeLarge (Malcolm McDowell) and his fellow droogs wore Dr Martens in Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), sales of the 10-holed variety of the boots soared.

6. Dr Martens were declared an offensive weapon in the UK in the early 70s because of their steel toecaps and being the footwear of choice of armies of football hooligans. Police insisted they could only be worn into football grounds if the laces were removed.

*Number four is, of course, cobbler's.

Kiwi

The biggest shoe polish brand in the world seemed to rise to global dominance simply on the back of being in the pack of soldiers in both World Wars. But that would be to overlook its inherent quality and constant desire for expansion. Not to mention a tin design so instantly recognisable that it quickly didn't even need to say what it was selling. A product, in other words, which does exactly what it doesn't say on the tin.



Who would have guessed that opening a tin of shoe polish could be so pleasing? Don't get me wrong. Cleaning shoes is not a personal passion; it's just that turning the little lever on Kiwi's container has always been a nice moment in an otherwise tedious task.

While a superior product formulation, more-affordable leather and a couple of World Wars all helped Kiwi to become a global leader in the sector, the opening mechanism surely played a key part. Introduced as a practical design solution (ergonomic and keeping fingers free from polish), it quietly became a ritual. Somehow, unscrewing or prising off the lid just doesn't make the same impression as popping it open.

We discard brand rituals like these at our peril – who can forget when Nestlé did away with Kit Kat's silver foil and paper? Literally tearing off and throwing away precious brand equity built over decades.

As you would expect, Kiwi has innovated and developed products that can save you having to take off your shoes before you polish them or washing your hands once you have. Refreshingly though, the original tin remains at the heart of the brand over 100 years later.

They say that you can judge a man by his shoes, apparently because it tells you whether he takes pride in the little things. Kiwi teaches us that the smallest of design details can make all the difference. //



Timeline



Kiwi logo



Advertising, 1940s



Vintage Kiwi tin, c.1960s



Advertising Spain, 2003



Advertising Japan, 2009

1878

The Ramsay family, including a young William, moved to Australia, where they prospered in the property business.

1901

On a visit to New Zealand, Ramsay met his future wife, Annie Elizabeth Meek, and he named the shoe polish after the flightless bird associated with that country.

1914

William Ramsay died and the business was taken over by his father John, who was succeeded 10 years later by William's sons.

2006

The business collected and distributed 100,000 shoes for Africa as part of project Malaki, to mark 100 years of Kiwi.

2011

SC Johnson acquired Kiwi for a reported \$328m.

Did you know?

One of these facts isn't fair dinkum.*

Image courtesy of Chris Anderson.



1. Kiwi used to carry a shade of polish called 'Nigger Brown'. It became associated with the (white) Australian rugby league centre, Edwin Brown, who was said to use the polish. In 1960, he had a stand named after him at his home club of Toowoomba in Queensland. Despite the unceasing efforts of anti-racism activist, Stephen Hagan, the E S 'Nigger Brown' stand remained in existence until the ground was modernised in 2008.

2. It's believed that because of its early and widespread international use, Kiwi polish was instrumental in making the Kiwi both the national symbol of New Zealand and the most commonly used name for the islands' residents.

3. New Zealand band, Crowded House, released a limited edition vinyl copy of their album, *Temple of Low Men* with a cover which pastiched the Kiwi shoe polish logo.

4. Kiwi shoe polish contains 3,6'-Bis-(Diethylamino)-Fluoran, the same dye that used to be used in heat-sensitive carbonless paper for fax machines.

5. The same substance which gives supermarket apples their sheen is also used in Kiwi shoe polish. It's called Carnauba wax and can also be found in chewing gum and dental floss.

6. In Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, ex-Marine Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro) is seen setting his Kiwi shoe polish alight to soften it prior to buffing his boots. This is possible, although not necessarily recommended, because the polish contains the highly flammable heavy naphtha.

*Calm down Record Collector readers! The vinyl alluded to in number three doesn't actually exist.

Kenwood

It is surely not overstating the case to say the Kenwood Chef is a design classic, worthy of a place somewhere between the iMac and the Mini in the pantheon of great British innovations; a perfect blend of form and function. The national affection for this doughty kitchen appliance stems from its simple virtues of looking good, working well and lasting an awfully long time. A device which earns the praise of serious foodies and rank amateurs is a rare and beautiful thing.



It should come as no surprise that electrical engineer Ken Wood honed his skills on radars in World War II. His signature product, the Kenwood Chef, is exactly what you want by your side when going into battle in the kitchen.

Everything about its simple, solid design tells you that it means business. Whether you're kneading dough or beating eggs, you know it will make light of the most arduous culinary work.

Its industrial roots were plain to see in the original design and it's largely unchanged today. While it has been through some subtle cosmetic changes: from beige, through white to the contemporary silver finish – it still looks as solid as ever.

Perhaps too solid: a modern marketer might raise an eyebrow at the durability of the Kenwood Chef's design. Where's the need to upgrade or invest in accessories? To the consumer, though, that's the very thing that makes the design great.

It is fair to say that it has less retro cool than the American KitchenAid, but there is something shamelessly functional about the Chef's styling that's uniquely British. That's probably why it looks most at home on the kitchen counter of a country cottage, somewhere between the Aga and the pantry.

Beyond durability, however, the Kenwood does have one piece of killer branding engineered into its design. The mixing beater still proudly integrates the shape of a 'K' – a little detail that makes a deep impression. //



Timeline



Advertising, 1930s



Kenwood Chef A700D, 1950s



Advertising, 1960s



Kenwood Chef, c.1963



Titanium Chef KM010

1947

The Kenwood Manufacturing Company's first product, the Turnover toaster, launched.

1950

The Kenwood Chef made its debut at the Ideal Home Exhibition. It cost about £20 – just over 5% of the average annual salary.

1960

Kenneth Grange, the designer who would be responsible for the look of British Rail's InterCity 125 trains, redesigned the Kenwood Chef.

2001

Italian company De'Longhi acquired Kenwood.

2006

The oldest working Kenwood Chef (aged 56 years) was discovered in Bristol.

2009

The next generation of the Kenwood Chef was launched. The Cooking Chef featured induction technology under the bowl to allow it to be cooked in.

2010

The Kenwood Chef celebrated its 60th anniversary.

Ricard

Ricard turned 80 in 2012, during which time it has progressed from nothing to the third-biggest drinks company in the world (albeit after a merger with its arch-rival). The smell, the taste, even the look is synonymous with summer in France but it symbolises that which divides us. For the French it's a way of life. For the English, the classic holiday drink – a bottle of which it's compulsory to have languishing at the back of our drinks cabinets.



Ricard is an unusual Champion, because its packaging is neither particularly original, nor memorable. Launched as a rival to Pernod, the leading pastis of its day, the Ricard bottle bears more than passing similarity to it. Yet the brand deserves a medal for making humble barware an advertising medium all its own.

Churned out by a dedicated 'propaganda factory', ashtrays, water jugs, carafes, tumblers and a multitude of other drinkers' trinkets made the Ricard brand ubiquitous in post-war French café society.

Maybe success was down to Paul Ricard's optimism in deploying a bright combination of sunshine yellow and azure blue at an austere time – a confidence mirrored by his bold slogan 'Garçon! Un Ricard!'

Whether by luck or judgement, his cheery sentiment struck a chord, searing the brand into the national consciousness and propelling Ricard to market leadership.

Brushing aside concerns over the partnership of alcohol brands with motorsport, Ricard stayed top of mind through its bright yellow racing cars, going on to construct a textbook example of a branded venue – Circuit Paul Ricard on the outskirts of Paris.

Above all, perhaps Ricard serves to remind us that in design, the best ideas are often simple. Universal availability and eye-catching point of sale might be Marketing 101, but they are first principles for commercial success. *AK*

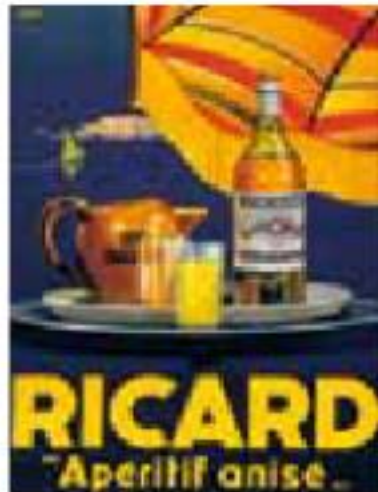
Image courtesy of Marc Newson Limited. Photo credit: Fabrice Gousset.



Timeline



Vintage Ricard pitcher



Ricard 'Aperitif Anisé'



Ricard glass carafe



Advertising, 2001



80th anniversary, Les Arts Décoratifs

1909

Paul Ricard was born in Sainte-Marthe, a suburb of Marseille.

1948

Ricard sponsored the Tour de France.

1969

Paul Ricard built Le Castellet, a Grand Prix track. It has since been renamed the Paul Ricard Circuit.

1984

The billionth bottle of Ricard was sold. The advertising slogan 'Un Ricard, sinon rien' ('A Ricard, or nothing') was coined.

1993

The first limited-edition design was introduced. They have since become a regular feature of Ricard.

1997

Paul Ricard, one of France's most respected businessmen, died.

2011

Ricard underwent a redesign to appeal to a younger market.

Did you know?

Attention rosbifs. Il y a un whopper at large dans le following.*



1. Paul Ricard said one of his proudest achievements was to smuggle two Ricard jugs into the grotto at Lourdes.

2. As a young man, Ricard dreamed of being a painter, but his father insisted that he go into the family wine business. After retiring from the business he went back to painting.

3. In the 1930s, Ricard kept a small supply of absinthe for its most valued customers. The bottles were labelled in exactly the same fashion as the normal Ricard except for a thin green line running around the outside edge of the Ricard logo.

4. Ricard was introduced to home-made pastis by an old shepherd who called it 'the thing' or 'tiger's milk'.

5. During the war, Paul Ricard developed a petrol substitute made from cherries and plums for the Resistance. At the time, he was fond of riding around the Camargue region of France on horseback, shouting, 'J'emmerde le marechal Petain et son gouvernement.' ('I shit on Marshall Petain and his government.')

6. The Ricard company benefitted enormously in the post-war years from the energies of its brilliant marketing director, Charles Pasqua. Alongside his company business, Pasqua was heavily involved in politics, including far-right vigilante groups and served as Minister for the Interior in two separate administrations. He also became one of France's major powerbrokers.

*The truth is absinthe, sorry, absent from number three.

Benefit

Proving that even in the perennially po-faced world of fashion, there's still room for a company with a sense of humour, Benefit is the US cosmetic brand that still manages to put a smile on the face of its customers. Integral to its success has been an unconventional approach to its packaging and marketing. What else would you expect from a company founded by a pair of singing sisters from San Francisco?



In the serious business of beauty, Benefit provides some welcome light relief. It also provides a different brand lesson. Unlike many other champions of design, Benefit's distinctiveness hasn't been achieved through the consistent application and gentle evolution of key visual equities. Instead, the brand is easy to identify because of its distinctive personality. Where others are strictly serious, Benefit is playful and fun.

Using personality to define the brand, Benefit gives each product the freedom to tell its own story and pick an outfit to match. The result was described by one colleague as 'a beauty parlour that feels like a sweet shop'. Each product entices you differently and leaves you wanting to try them all.

That's not to say that there isn't a visual coherence to the brand. The sense of fun is manifest in bright colours, kitsch imagery and above all else,

the product names. 'Hello Flawless' make-up, 'The Porefessional' complexion balm and 'They're Real!' mascara simply couldn't come from any other brand.

The one visual ingredient that is applied consistently is the Benefit logo. Ironically, for a brand that swims against the tide, the logo conforms to the conventions of the beauty world – echoing the classic fonts used to represent famous fashion magazines.

The only clue as to Benefit's true character is the letter 'f', represented by the musical symbol 'forte', meaning loud. It suggests Benefit never intended to go about its business quietly. //



Timeline



Co-founders, twins Jean & Jane Ford



Rose Tint (an early version of Benefit), 1977



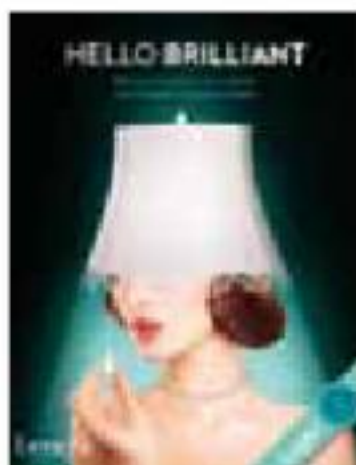
The Benefit logo



Advertising, 2009



A Benefit Boutique



Advertising, 2011

1976

Twins Jean and Jane Ford from Indiana moved to San Francisco and founded a beauty boutique after a brief stint as models.

1990

The Ford sisters called their make-up range Benefit and began selling it to department stores.

1996

Ian Marshall and Gail Bojarski discovered Benefit at a beauty counter in Henri Bendel in New York and approached the Ford sisters with a view to bringing it to the UK.

2000

Benefit became part of the LVMH portfolio for an undisclosed sum, with the Fords retaining a minority stake and creative control of the products.

2011

A brand new skincare line was added to the Benefit range, with a look based on 19th century apothecary bottles and developed by its parent company, LVMH Laboratories.

Did you know?

Which of these is masking the truth?*



1. Co-founders Jean and Jane Ford have been known to perform *a cappella* songs at press conferences to explain the virtues of new products.

2. Benefit's best-selling blusher, Benetint, was created in response to a San Franciscan stripper who was looking for a product to redden her nipples.

3. Benefit's fragrance range, Crescent Row, was inspired by the Royal Crescent in Bath.

4. To celebrate its arrival in Harrods, Benefit launched a face powder called Only The Sloaney.

5. The company's original business plan, drafted in 1976, required it to sell \$33 of goods a day to break even.

6. The company changed its name from Face Place to Benefit in 1990. On returning from a visit to Italy, Jane apparently declared, 'If only we could find a word that would fit with *bene*.'

*Number four has no foundation in the truth.

Supreme

However hard it might be to develop a brand with cult status and unquestioned credibility, it must be exponentially more difficult to retain that cachet for nearly two decades. Such is the case with the effortlessly cool Supreme, purveyors of cutting edge skatewear. Although it's clearly a mistake to think it is effortless. Founder James Jebbia confessed what might serve as a mission statement for a brand that doesn't believe in them: 'We work very hard to make everything look effortless.'



I think Supreme offers a great example of the art and power of clever curation. I am no expert of skate design trends, but from my non-street level perspective, Supreme doesn't really do much in the way of brand design. Rather it excels at brand behaviour and curation (hiring the best creative partners) becomes an approach in itself.

By associating itself with Damien Hirst, Terry Richardson, Kate Moss et al it is clearly showing it's 'a cut above'. Having ideas above its station is what defines the brand – it has demonstrably good taste. How many brands would you say that of? All this is underpinned with a pretty basic (rather artless) core identity showing that it doesn't have to flaunt it. It is 'downtown' after all, so it's keeping it real and trying not to look over excited about the company it's keeping.

I have been told that when Supreme was designing its London outlet it elected for a parquet floor neither reclaimed or 'off the peg' but bespoke made. It was the least practical and by far the most expensive option. It's also a choice that walks the walk, as well as talks the talk.

I guess Supreme understands that you get what you pay for – it's the opposite of 'understanding the price of everything and the value of nothing'.

Not very groovy if you're in procurement, but that's why it can charge a premium. And why it is in possession of those most priceless yet illusive qualities: cool and cachet. SA



Image courtesy of Cindy Hu.

Timeline



Kermit by Terry Richardson, 2008



John Baldessani decks, 2010



Lady Gaga by Terry Richardson, 2011



Supreme & Campbell's Soup collaboration, 2012



Liberty Camp caps, 2012

1994

Supreme opened its first store on Lafayette Street in downtown Manhattan.

2006

Supreme and Timberland launched a version of the classic Field Boot.

2009

The company launched a series of items with Budweiser including a T-Shirt and canvas duffle bag.

2010

Supreme launched T-Shirts and hooded sweatshirt created in conjunction with The Clash.

2011

Levi's and Supreme joined forces to produce a small capsule collection including a Supreme Edition of the classic Levi's 505 Zip-Fly Jean.

2012

The brand joined forces with Clarks to release a new version of the Wallabee Boot.

Did you know?

There's a story here that's done a 180 from the truth.*

Decks by Takashi Murakami (2007), Damien Hirst (2009) and Jeff Koons (2006).



1. When Tyler 'The Creator' accepted his 2011 MTV Video Music Award, his speech was so expletive-laden that it was reduced by censors to, 'Yo, I'm as excited as... , yo, I wanted...' During the enforced silence viewers were forced to focus on his outfit which was dominated by the Supreme logo on his hat. It was considered by industry experts to be one of the brand's most potent pieces of marketing.

2. In Supreme's earliest days customers were not allowed to touch the clothes, even if they intended to buy.

3. Supreme's white on red logo was inspired by designer, Barbara Kruger and designed by the graffiti artist, Futura. He was previously known as Futura 2000 and is perhaps best known for his work with The Clash with whom he would appear on stage.

4. In a 2004 episode of *The Simpsons*, Bart is seen to use a skateboard which parodies a Supreme design.

5. In a list of 'The 50 Most Influential People in Sneakers Right Now' compiled by Complex Sneakers, Supreme creator, James Jebbia was ranked Number 15.

6. Supreme founder, James Jebbia, was a child actor and appeared in both *Grange Hill* and *Just William*. He only appeared in the first series of *Grange Hill* as the character Tommy Watson and was replaced by Paul McCarthy.

*Bart my limited-run, highly-collectable skate shorts.
Number four is a fiction.

Crayola

Where Proust had his madeleines, Americans have Crayola. According to a Yale University study, for an instantly recognisable aroma that's capable of whisking them back to an earlier time, US citizens swear by the multi-coloured crayons. It's an indication of how deeply embedded in the national psyche the simple box of cheap colouring implements has become and suggests that even in a digital, pixellated world of multiple hi-tech options, there might still be a future for the humble crayon.



It's all about colour. Crayola took a memorable name and framed it with a memorable design. The early packs were things of typographic beauty, the simple green and yellow livery creating an impact. The dynamic chevron shape of the design's 'architecture' has also endured. These days things might be a little less elegant (or simple), but the basic design formula has remained consistent.

All this is a great lesson in 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it'. Sticking to a template has ensured that its visual equities now have a symbolic power; Crayola defines its category and represents a particular time and place in all our lives. As parents, we remain loyal because Crayola is familiar from our own formative creative play.

Being consistent with the graphics also liberates the brand to do what it has always done brilliantly

– endlessly innovate and evolve, while remaining recognisably itself. By respecting its past, Crayola is rewarded with the best thing branding can generate: trust. It ensures we give it the benefit of the doubt even with some of its more glitzy product lines.

The heart of the brand, crayons, were a perfect design for their purpose: simple, attractive, affordable, the right size and beautifully distinctive. Today, Crayola steers clear of innovation that requires too much instruction or 'set' use of the products. It enables, rather than controls, creativity in the young. Every great design champion probably started out using Crayola and benefiting from this ethos, which is reason enough to praise it. SA



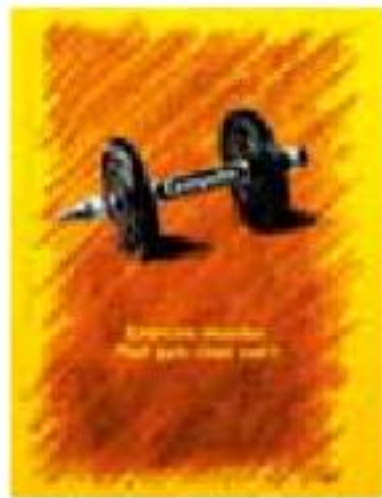
Timeline



Crayola USPS stamp, 1998



Crayola Collector's Edition tin



Advertising, 2000



Crayola juice box holder



Crayola ColourStudio HD

1885

Edwin Binney and his cousin, C Harold Smith, formed a partnership and called their company Binney & Smith.

1903

The Crayola name was devised by Alice Binney, wife of co-founder Edwin. The name derived from *craie*, French for chalk, and 'ola', from oleaginous (oily).

1930

Artist Grant Wood produced the oil painting *American Gothic*. As a child, he had entered and won a Crayola colouring contest, inspiring him to pursue a career in art.

1978

Crayola crayons celebrated its 75th anniversary. The same year it introduced a range of marker pens.

1995

A 'magic scents' range included crayons with the smell of coconut, liquorice and chocolate. These were quickly replaced by non-food smells such as fresh-air and lumber after parents complained that children could mistakenly eat them.

2007

Binney & Smith was renamed Crayola, reflecting the popularity and recognition of the brand.

Did you know?

Hue must be joking! One of these is a shade untrue.*

Converse All Star Crayola, 2012.



1. In 2000, Americans were invited to vote for their favourite Crayola colour. George W Bush chose Blue Bell. Coincidentally, blue also happens to be the favourite colour of most Americans.

2. The working title for The Beach Boys' classic album, *Pet Sounds*, was *Crayola 66*.

3. By their 10th birthday the average American child will have worn down 720 Crayola crayons.

4. The melting point of Crayola crayons (take note all who have left them on the back seat of a car on a summer's day) is between 128 and 147 degrees Fahrenheit.

5. In 1998, the US Postal Service released a 32 cent stamp bearing the picture of an original box of Crayola crayons.

6. In 2008, a group of US children were invited by Crayola executives to come up with new names and new shades which they felt were 'in' that year. The 'Kids' Choice Colour' list ran: Super Happy, Fun in the Sun, Giving Tree, Bear Hug, Awesome, Happy Ever After, Famous and Best Friends.

*Wouldn't it be nice if number two were true? But it's not.

Chupa Chups

'Who loves ya, baby?' enquired a Chupa Chups-chomping Telly Savalas as the hard-boiled NYC detective Kojak back in the mid-70s. In the case of the lollipop behemoth, the answer would seem to be, 'everybody'. From the Salvador Dalí-designed logo on its wrapper to the sugary contents within, favoured by children and ex-smokers the world over, Chupa Chups spreads a little Spanish sunshine wherever it goes.



First-mover advantage is not only about being first off the drawing board; apparently, American George Smith was the first to put sweets on sticks, back in 1908. Sadly for Smith, his brand fell victim to the Great Depression. Then along came Chupa Chups. As its inventor, Enric Bernat, noted: 'If you can be first to do something, and you do it after due consideration, it's an advantage.' The second half of that statement explains why this particular design has endured and come to be considered the definitive original.

'Due consideration' says it all. The best design is not just a 'thing', it's a system: of innovation, manufacture, display and navigation. It is about all the elements being thought through and working elegantly together. In Chupa Chups' case, 'due consideration' meant recognising that a spherical sweet works well in the mouth and that plastic sticks would resolve a struggle to source timber.

It's about the magnificent display units which build on Salvador Dalí's 'daisy' logo, offering up a sweetie bouquet to the buyers. With the logo sat atop the product, the rest of the tiny pack is freed up for colours that deliver easy navigation and look, en masse, like a group of cheerful beach parasols.

The most sophisticated thinking is often the simplest. Delivering something as seemingly uncomplicated, yet effortlessly perfect, as the Chupa Chup requires a systematically rigorous approach to the original idea and its creative execution. SA



Timeline



Original logo designed by Salvador Dalí, 1969



Chupa Chups Seat 600, 1960s



Chupa Chups stationery



Advertising, 2009



Chupa Chups tin

1958

Bernat called his sweet-on-a-stick creation Chups, taken from the Spanish word *chupar*, meaning 'to suck'. It was renamed Chupa Chups in 1961.

1967

A second factory was opened in Sant Esteve Sesrovires, Barcelona, followed soon after by its first international subsidiary in Perpignan, France.

1979

Sales of Chupa Chups reached 10 billion lollipops. This figure had doubled just nine years later.

1995

Chupa Chups became the 'first lollipop in space' when it was taken aboard the MIR space station by a Russian astronaut.

2004

The Chupa Chups lollipop became one of 122 objects displayed in the 'Humble Masterpieces' show at New York's Museum of Modern Art.

2006

Three years after the death of Bernat, the business was taken over by Italian group Perfetti Van Melle.

Did you know?

Which of these is a fib? Suck it and see.*



1. In 1958, the first Chupa Chups (known as Chups originally) cost one peseta each and were considered relatively expensive.

2. In 1996, inspired by its catchphrase, 'This sucks!', Chupa Chups brought out Beavis and Butthead versions with rotating heads of the slacker youths.

3. From 2000 to 2003, Chupa Chups were official sponsors of Sheffield Wednesday. During this period the club were relegated from the Premiership to Division Two.

4. Chupa Chups became inextricably linked with *Kojak* because actor Telly Savalas was trying to give up smoking when the series began shooting.

5. A standard 12g Chupa Chups lolly contains 45 calories.

6. When Chupa Chups brought out a series of lollipops to promote *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, they changed the colour of the sticks from white to black.

Acknowledgements

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Which brand is known as 'le monstre'?

Which brand has a melting point of between 128 and 147 degrees Fahrenheit?

Which best-selling product was originally intended to redden nipples?

A herringbone gear-wheel inspires which brand logo?

Which brand has no debt?

...and what makes a Champion of Design?

This book celebrates thirty-five great works of design, the people who created them and the clients who bought them.