

How Making Women Feel Good Brought LowLow to New Highs



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AWARDS

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COMPANY PROFILE

Chemistry is Ireland's most creative agency. We have an unmatched record in ICAD, the Irish creative awards; we are also the only Irish agency to have won Gold at Cannes, and to have been awarded at global events such as D&AD and the One Show. We love to create work that is visually beautiful. We love to create work that is controversial, work that gets people talking. And we love to create work that engages on a deep emotional level, or simply makes you laugh. But above all we love work that works. And we love to be where our client's consumers are. To that end, our most powerful creative ideas have two facets in common: they clearly match marketing intent with consumer need, and they come from insights based on a thorough understanding of the context the idea needs to operate in. So although we prize creativity, we never regard it as an end in itself. Its true purpose is to realise our clients' marketing objectives. This was our belief when we established Chemistry as a fully integrated communications agency in 1999, and it remains our belief today.

Vizeum was created for the new era of media: A convergent world where consumers and content come together, in real time, on platforms and devices; a global world massively impacted by digital technology which is totally reshaping the environment that brands and people live in.

Vizeum embraces every dimension, linking social, mobile, offline and online, generating emotions and trust, and building powerful connections between brands and people at speed and scale.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Sick of skinny? So were we.

For years, the low fat food category had been bombarding women with a skinny “ideal.” The low fat category had slipped in to a world of clichés depicting women struggling to pull on their jeans with coat-hangers, day-dreaming of creamy cakes in business meetings and looking longingly at their boyfriend’s burger while they chomped away on a plate of leaves.

LowLow was one of many brands playing in the low fat category and had lost relevance with its consumers who were actively being put off by healthier food brands claiming great taste but not delivering. LowLow had, to date, failed to address growing consumer cynicism and lacked relevance by making claims that consumers didn’t believe. As a result, sales began to nose-dive and pressure to reduce investment in advertising and communications increased.

This case study will show how LowLow captured the hearts and minds of Irish women by saying we had had enough. Women do not have a vacant space between their ears. They are intelligent, they want to enjoy food and they want a more realistic, healthier ideal. And most of all, they want to enjoy themselves, to live their life, not endure it.

We reversed the fortunes of a declining brand, by breaking free from tired clichés, saying no to skinny red dresses and good-bye to a world of low fat bland and creating a campaign that was like no other campaign our consumer had seen.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

LowLow launched into Ireland in 1989, pioneering healthier butter spreads and subsequently a healthier cheese range. For the next 15 years the brand enjoyed double digit growth and at its peak reached €30m due to a buoyant marketplace and significant investment in new products. But this accelerated growth reached a plateau due to an increasingly challenging economic backdrop, a changing retail landscape, as well as a consumer who had become disaffected with healthier food brands.

Like many of its peers in the low fat/ “diet” category, LowLow had failed to evolve with the changing attitudes of consumers and found itself in a situation where lack of brand engagement and relevance were translating into free-falling sales. This sales decline meant the brand was experiencing increased pressure to reduce the amount of investment in advertising spend and increase promotional spend.

In addition to all of the above, the low fat category in which LowLow was competing was filled with brands with much larger brands. For instance Kellogg’s Special K had over 7 times our annual budget.

Although ambitious for the market context, the following objectives were set:

Commercial objectives:

- ▶ Halt 5% decline of butter spreads and improve market share by 6% (1 percentage point) by end of 2013
- ▶ Grow market share in modern cheese formats
 - Increase market share of LowLow Grated from 12.1% to 13.1%
 - Increase market share of LowLow Slices from 10.5% to 11.5%
- ▶ Launch Snack Pack
 - Bring New Consumers to the Category: Target 30,000
 - Incremental Brand Sales Growth: Target ROS 10

In order to achieve the above, we set ourselves the following communications objectives:

- ▶ To give the brand a distinctive and compelling point of view
- ▶ To promote a positive relationship between women and food

To create a new brand world that reflected the attitude of our core consumer.

THE TASK

Our consumer

We had done an extensive amount of research in order to really understand our core consumer - what she liked/disliked, what were her attitudes to life and food. This helped us paint a picture. So who was she?

We named her Holly. Holly makes active choices to feel good. She has a positive but relaxed attitude to health. She likes to care for herself and gets a real kick out of making choices that pay off this feeling. But she insists on enjoyment and is not going to drive herself demented with perfectionism.

In an ideal world, she would make “feel good” type choices all the time but she lives in the real world and has a busy life, which she thrives on. All of this sometimes conspires to throw her off path.

Holly was put off by the patronizing and clichéd images that healthier food brands used. While she aspired to a healthy lifestyle, she still loved food and wanted easy, enjoyable solutions to eat healthily every day. As a result, not only did Holly fail to connect with the ads she saw, she found them irrelevant to her needs as well as pretty insulting.

Our campaign needed to find a brand image that was more positive and reflective of Holly. But how to do this without parading another reductive set of images that, despite our best efforts, may also end up as clichés?

The brand

Food - First and foremost, LowLow is a food brand and must create convincing food appeal. This could never be clichéd food shots; it had to be much more. We needed to find a way to show her that we understand her desire to eat well but to also enjoy her healthy aspiration.

Lifestyle - We needed to create strong emotional engagement. To do this, we would have to show Holly how the LowLow brand fits in with and supports her lifestyle

THE TASK

Enjoyment - Contrary to category expectations, LowLow could not be punitive – its promise had to be a positive one. Therefore, the world we created needed to be one of enjoyment. Holly always enjoys herself, whether with mates or on her own. When it comes to food, there had to be palpable enjoyment.

The category

The category in which LowLow was competing held many challenges:

Spend - Other brands within the ‘healthier foods’ category were throwing money at their comms. Brands like Kellogg’s Special K were spending nearly 7 times the budget we had (and we forecasted this would become even more pronounced in 2013) so gaining standout in this arena was not going to be easy.

Communications - Advertising from low fat and so-called healthy brands was perceived as bland, insulting or irrelevant. Holly was simply not engaging with the category communications so we needed find a way to change this and connect with her in a new way.

Product Promise - And of course, most products within the category failed to deliver on their promise of good taste. How could we convince Holly that LowLow was different and encourage her to try.

THE STRATEGY

Category Triggers – A negative space

Holly was turned off for multiple reasons: the category used punitive language and spoke down to her, often using pejorative imagery. It was un-empowering, featuring unrealistic body imagery. In short, it was judgemental.

Cultural tension – A more real, reflective female image

A more complex and strong female was on the rise, reflecting the rising economic force of women (women are responsible for over 80% of purchases made.) These women seek out more empowering images of themselves as these reflect their reality better.

Insight – A positively not negatively motivated consumer

Our consumer is consciously positive about everything in her life and this was no different when it came to food. She is positively motivated to seek out food solutions that suit her such as healthier and lighter food options, yet these tend to be framed negatively, communicated with little food appeal and with the assumption that she is on a diet.

Challenge – Persuading Holly

The LowLow brand was floundering in a category of banal clichéd communications while Holly herself was the antithesis of the category. The category communicated something so opposite from her own life, that she had disengaged herself from it. We had a tasty product range – but how could we convince Holly to try it?

We undertook a two-step approach which was unusual and unexpected for a brand of LowLow's size (with a budget up to 7 times smaller than its competitors.) Conventional wisdom says that to maximise impact, you should launch with a single message and with as much noise as your budget allows. However, we knew our consumer and we firmly believed something different was needed.

THE STRATEGY

Phase 1 – Breaking down barriers

Firstly, we realised we needed to communicate that LowLow was different from the rest of the category; it had a different point of view. It did not believe healthy eating had to be punitive. It did not promote skinniness. It did not believe that all women had the same, vacant desire to fit into some media stereotype.

In other words, we wanted to establish what the brand was not.

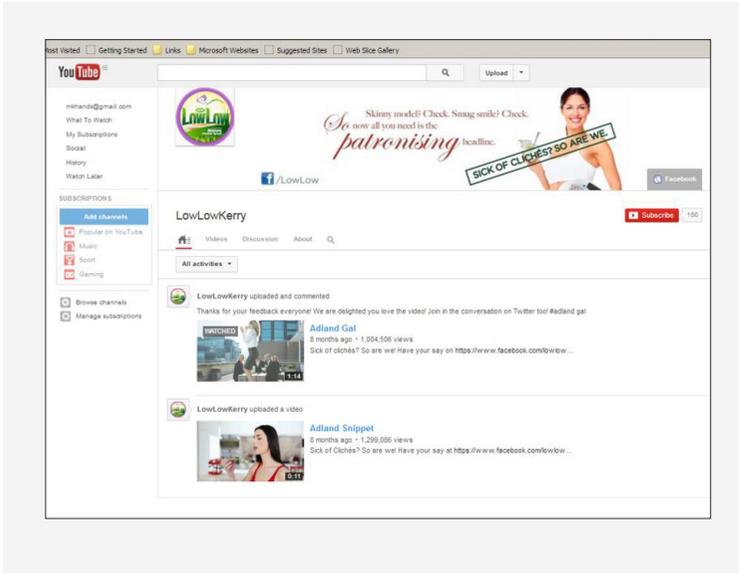
Phase 2 – Building a new aspiration

Then we could communicate what the LowLow brand is; a brand that believes that food, like life, should be enjoyed, not endured. A brand that believes we should all feel good about ourselves and about the food we eat. A brand that believes healthy, enjoyable living is something we can all aspire to.

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THE IDEA

We had a brand that was both healthy and tasted good. And we had Holly, our consumer who wanted healthy, enjoyable food to be part of her healthy, enjoyable life. So we needed a communications idea that would persuade her that LowLow could be part of the good life she aspired to. LowLow is all about making health enjoyable; it's what can make us feel doubly good. We support and recognise Holly's motivation to enjoy her choices in life, to feel good and celebrate these choices. We know that, for Holly, feeling good is about more than just food.

The Idea - The Kick of Feel Good

"Feel Good" is the point at which LowLow and Holly's values intersect. We know Holly makes active choices to be healthy but that doesn't make her a saint. Her appetite for life, fun and food is large and sits alongside her desire to be healthy. We wanted to bring these ideas closer together. The Kick of Feel Good recognised her desires and helped Holly to attain these in a busy life that is full of plans, even if it doesn't always go to plan.

Unlike other brands, LowLow embraces her motivation to feel good. This Kick of Feel Good idea helped us move away from focussing on the rational to the focussing on everything that is enjoyable, positive and fun in her life. It makes healthy living something that is always thoroughly enjoyable and something to aspire to. Just without all the numbing worthiness. And with a kick of Feel Good!

Communications plan

But let's not forget that, at the beginning of this journey, Holly and LowLow existed on opposite sides of a perceptual barrier. Hence our wish to establish, in Holly's mind, that the LowLow brand does not conform to the norms set out by the low fat category.

Phase 1 – Communicating what we are not and distancing LowLow from the clichéd world of low fat
To establish LowLow with a strong and relevant point of view, Chemistry created a 74 second online parody, aptly named 'Adland Gal', which was a humorous send up of the typical clichés seen in the world of diet ads.

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THE IDEA

This lampooned most broadcast advertising in this category i.e. bland, generic ads, filled with stick-thin models worried about their weight; women whose sole obsession seemed to be fitting into size 8 jeans; actors/stereotypes 'tucking in' to tiny morsels of punitive food; all set to so-called feelgood power ballads or pop soundtracks. We satirised the typical clichés seen in the world of diet ads, not for its own sake but to draw attention to just how wrong most low fat brands were in terms of getting the audience. And of course, to distance LowLow from it.

Our script featured three characters of the type normally found in low-fat or diet food ads; Smug Gal, Ditzzy Gal, and Muffin Gal. Then we carefully created accurate parodies of the type of ads they'd typically be found in, complete with an overblown soundtrack, and hilarious lyrics. Finally, we produced the script in exactly the same manner that one of our 'source' ads would be made, to the extent that we, as an agency, did not reveal that it was a parody to anyone involved in the making of the piece until we began shooting. To exploit in full the viral potential, we had to 'fly below the radar', so we recreated the high-production values, the casting, the performances, even the tone of most diet ads.

Then we needed to get the parody out there, so we could ask consumers if, like LowLow, they were sick of all the clichés.



To drive awareness of this online parody we used a tongue in cheek 10 second branded teaser for both TV and VOD and specifically ran the copy around targeted high affinity programmes.

To ensure maximum recall, Vizeum bought spots in all ad breaks within and surrounding these programmes.

THE IDEA

We also tapped in to the ‘dual screening’ media consumption of Holly and included a Facebook tag on the 10” teaser to give Holly the opportunity to continue her engagement with the brand and find out more.

We used Twitter to drive advocacy and peer-to-peer sharing. We invested in a full day of media and blogger briefing with a high profile panel to ensure awareness in these circles as well as providing an open forum to discuss the issues addressed in it.

This parody lived on YouTube with conversations hosted through our Facebook page.

Phase 2 – Communicating what we are and establishing LowLow as a brand for people who want to feel good

The Kick of the Feel Good idea positively disrupts the notion that healthy choices come with a compromise attached. It is the opposite of the world that our Adland Gal viral parodied.

People who have a healthy appetite for life are busy but they wouldn’t have it any other way. They love having a full plate of things to choose from – friends, family, and social life, work and career. Things that they know and enjoy, and new experiences that they can’t wait to take a big bite out of. And when they find something they like, they just can’t wait to share it.

When establishing the feel good world that LowLow represents, our first step was to create a new and vibrant brand world which reflected Holly’s own world and was opposite to the bland and sterile world of low fat. This consisted of a number of elements:

- ▶ Colours that are bright, bold, confident, vibrant and textured...like Holly and unlike the punitive world of diet
- ▶ A unique, hand-written font – because Holly herself is individual and likes to share stories
- ▶ A natural, impulsive and intimate photography style – as if taken by a good friend
- ▶ Normal, healthy, positive women who look interesting rather than perfect

THE IDEA

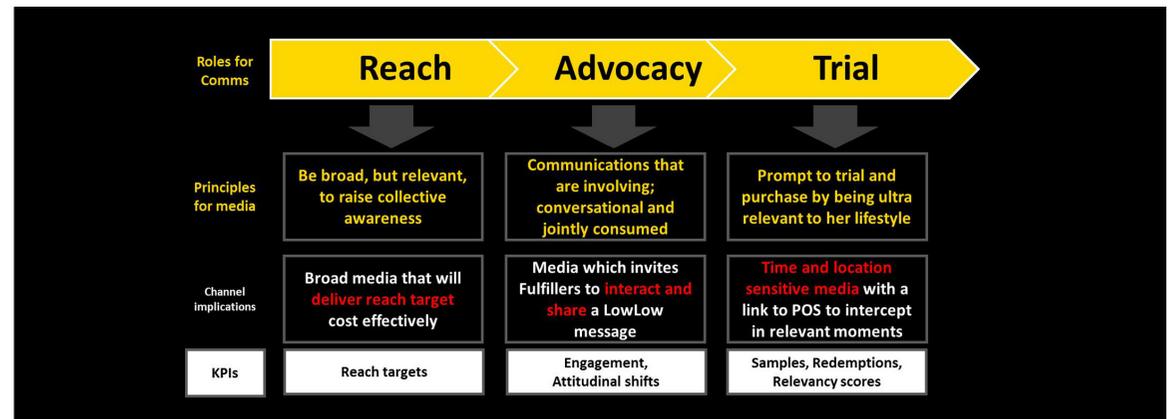
- ▶ Food that feels real, enjoyable, appetising as if made by Holly herself
- ▶ Positive, fun, conversational and playful tone of voice
- ▶ And a brand line that conveyed LowLow's brand position – "Food to feel good about"

FeelGood Tips

Our creative execution saw "Holly," our core consumer and embodiment of our brand, sharing her feel good tips for food and life. As a creative device, FeelGood Tips allowed us to communicate LowLow's brand values and attitude to life (and of course food!) in a charming and authentic way.



As we were now establishing what the LowLow brand stood for, creating a strong ATL brand presence was a priority. As well as launching the new brand positioning, very ambitious sales targets had been set, so the media approach was three pronged:



THE IDEA

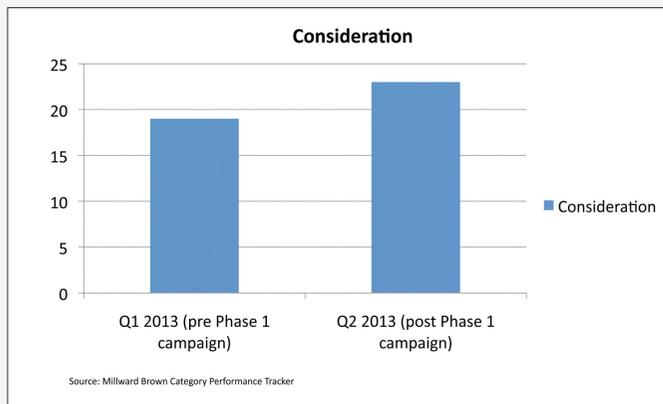
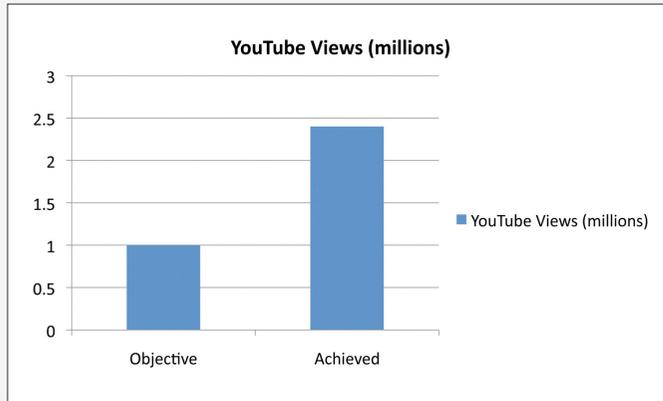
A strategy that would drive both reach and increase relevance was required in order to push LowLow into Holly's consideration funnel. With this in mind, a high frequency 30" TV campaign was booked in affinity programming to maximise relevance. This was coupled with tactical facebook posts to allow for more involvement and take advantage of dual screen behaviour.

To bolster LowLow's presence online and extend its reach, a high impact digital advertising campaign ran across sites that research told us Holly frequented. And in order to become a more regular part of Holly's day to day life, we partnered with Her.ie, an Irish website with content that appeals to Holly.

The third part of our approach was to encourage trial and this was done through both instore advertising and promotions.

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THE RESULTS

Sometimes to show what you stand for, you need to show what it is you stand against. The impact of the advertising campaign has been outstanding, far exceeding expectations and targets, setting the groundwork for the long term view and direction for the brand. On a modest budget, the success of this advertising campaign has been down to having something relevant and interesting to say to our consumer.

Let's take it in stages:

Communicating a point of view

The key objective of Adland Gal was to communicate a clear point of view for the LowLow brand and this as certainly been achieved. Launched online on 8th April 2013, the results for Adland Gal have been spectacular – the LowLow Adland Gal video was viewed almost 2.4 million times within 3 weeks of its launch in April 2013, far exceeding the year-end target of 1 million views.

This has generated fantastic leads for us and through Google analytics; we can identify those viewers who are within our target market. This enables us to re-target them with brand messages, thus leading them further down the path to purchase.

Google themselves were so impressed with the success of Adland Gal that they now use the campaign as a case study.

A relevant brand

The brand had been given a distinctive, relevant, compelling point of view that has clearly stuck a chord with our consumer. This has been reflected in the tracking studies undertaken by Millward Brown which shows the following changes before and after the campaign ran:

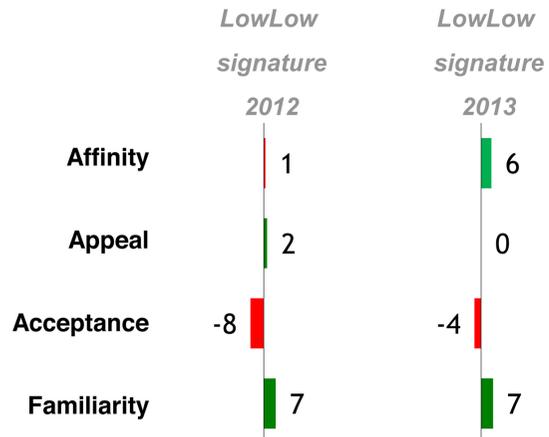
- ▶ Brand love grew +30% amongst the target audience
- ▶ Brand with a positive attitude grew +40% amongst the target audience
- ▶ Brand for me grew +19%
- ▶ And perhaps most importantly consideration grew +20%, showing stronger intention to purchase than had heretofore been experienced by the brand
- ▶ As a result of the first phase of communications, the decline in sales was halted for the first time in years, giving the required confidence to invest heavily in the brand for 2014

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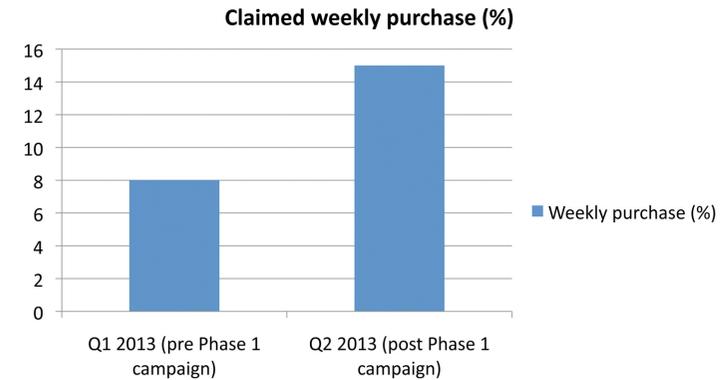
Brand Equity (2012 vs 2013)



THE RESULTS

A performing brand

But have these positive perceptions translated into business success for the brand? Claimed purchases have certainly shown marked improvement:



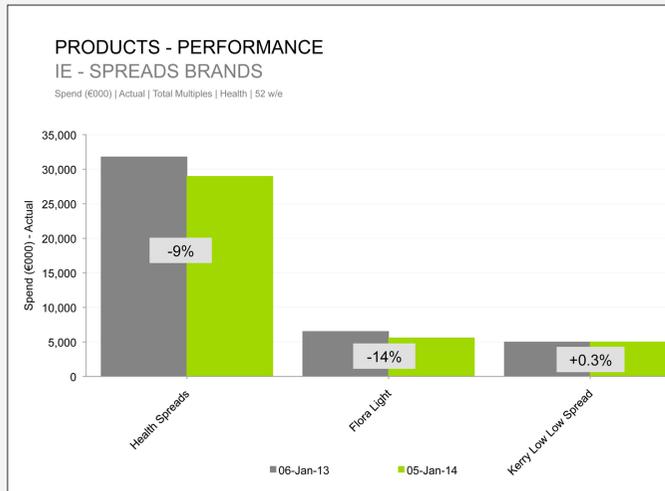
Source: Millward Brown Category Performance Tracker

After phase 1 of our campaign, claimed weekly purchases amongst our target audience almost doubled.

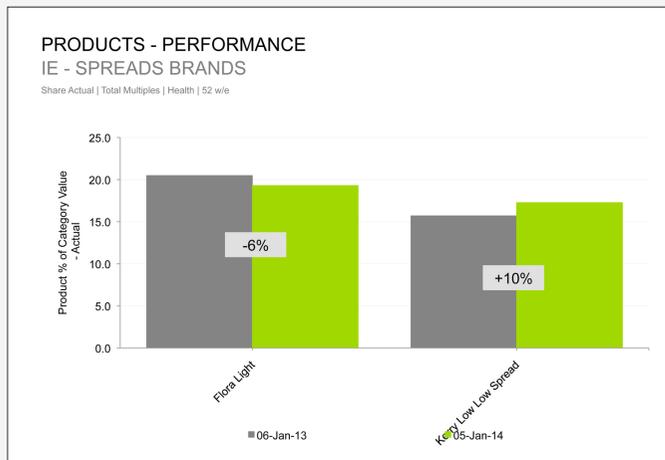
It was also encouraging to note that the Millward Brown H2 cheese category tracker reported that the brand equity signature for LowLow Cheese had made marked improvements when comparing end 2012 to end 2013 (See Brand Equity Graph).

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Please see above for IE spreads brand to market share



Please see above for IE spreads brands market value

THE RESULTS

Commercial performance

But the proof is in the pudding, as they say. We looked at impact on sales to see if these correlated with the positive impact on brand equity.

Butterspreads:

- ▶ Objective: Halt 5% decline of butter spreads and improve market share by 6% (1 percentage point) by end of 2013
- ▶ Achieved: In a category in -9% decline, LowLow held flat vs nearest competitor Flora Light -14%. LowLow grew its market share by 10%, whilst nearest competitor Flora declined -6% (source: Kantar Worldpanel to Jan 2014)

And most pleasing of all - when the Tips TV and digital campaign launched on January 6th 2014, LowLow surpassed its nearest competitor, Flora Light, for the first time ever, which is particularly significant as Flora had a very heavy media presence in the run up to Christmas.

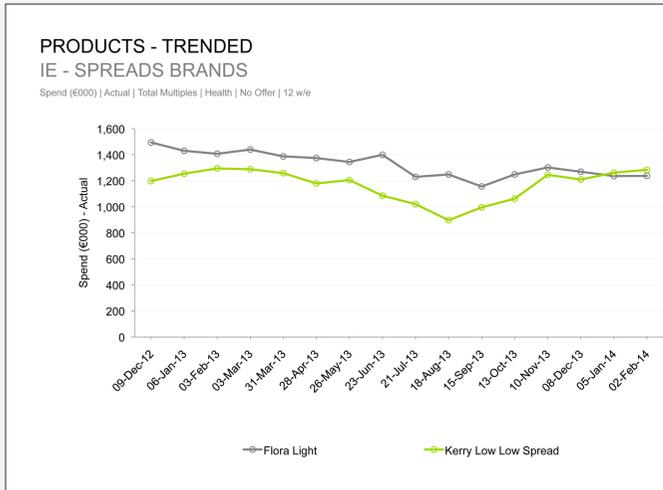
Modern Cheese formats:

- ▶ Objective: Grow market share in modern cheese formats
 - Increase market share of LowLow Grated from 12.1% to 13.1%
 - Increase market share of LowLow Slices from 10.5% to 11.5%
- ▶ Achieved: In a category where private label and discounters are the only 'brands' in real organic growth we have successfully beaten our targets
 - Increased market share of LowLow Grated to 13.75%
 - Increase market share of LowLow Slices to 13.9%

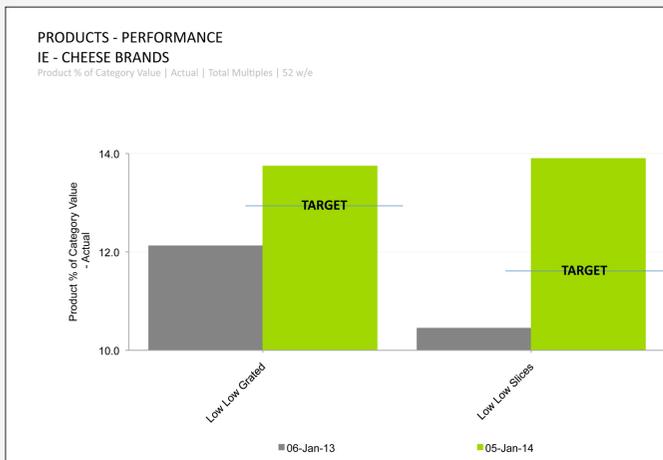
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See above for cheese brand value



See above for cheese market share

THE RESULTS

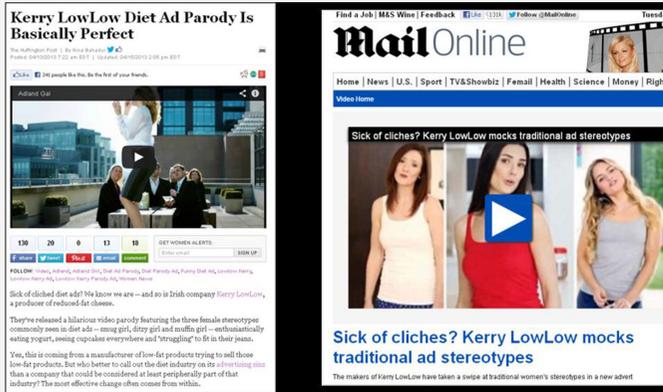
Snack Pack

This new format was launched into stores in late 2013 and experienced moderate uptake. However, after the LowLow brand ATL campaign launched in January 2014, all targets were smashed.

- ▶ **Objective:**
Bring New Consumers to the Category: Target 30,000
Incremental Brand Sales Growth: Target ROS 10
- ▶ **Achieved:**
New Households 50,000
83% of Growth in the Adult Snacking Category is from LowLow Snack Pack
Business Case 160% of target

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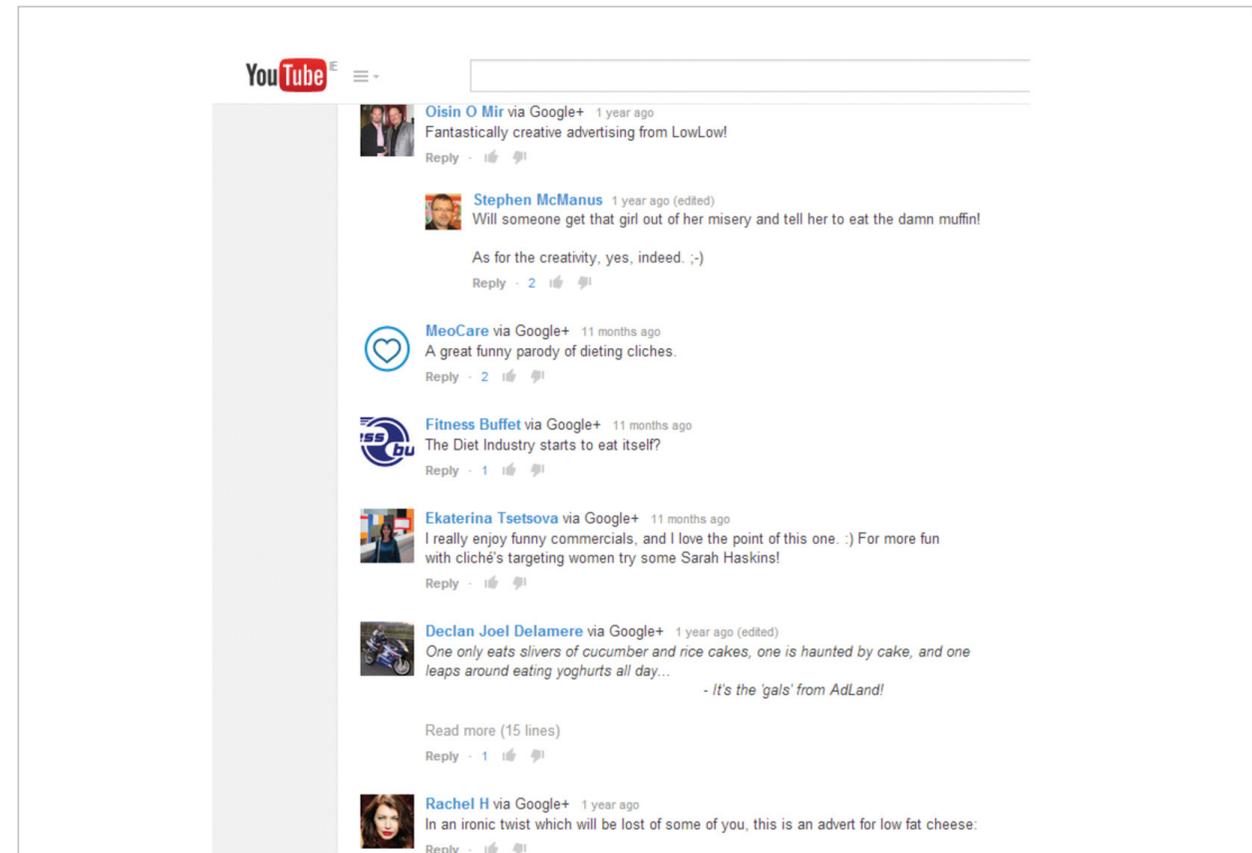
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THE IMPACT

The campaign garnered amazingly positive coverage in this market but proof that its message struck a chord can be seen in the media uptake across the globe, such as in the Daily Mail and as far as the Huffington Post.

Perhaps the best proof is from consumers themselves. Here is a sample of what they had to say about Adland Gal:



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THE IMPACT

By creating advocates and recruiting our consumer through an emotional connection, we have amassed a following on Facebook of over 100,000 fans, with strong interaction and conversation.

But they haven't just liked the page they have actively engaged with our content – with an engagement rate of 1.02% we consistently beat the FMCG average of 0.07%.

We've seen brand posts truly landing our message and delivering high levels of engagement.



- ▶ Both brand messages and our attitude really resonate with high levels of likes, shares and comments.
- ▶ We know that our message is resonating well as our 'unlikes' average is well below 2% (so once they join us people are staying)

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THE IMPACT

But perhaps the best result of all is that, as a brand, we are promoting a positive relationship between women and eating by changing the way the category relates to women.

The image shows a screenshot of social media comments, likely from Facebook, praising a LowLow advertisement. The comments are arranged in two columns. Each comment includes a profile picture, the user's name, the text of the comment, and the date and time it was posted. The comments are as follows:

- Sylvia Cawley** brilliant ad love it, most other diet ads targetng women are so patronising
8 April at 15:05 · Unlike · 👍 6
- Eileen Sheeran Hopkins** Love it!! They say that glossy magazines give us body image issues, but it's those kind of ads that make us feel like we're failing in our lifestyle choices. Well done Low Low for pointing out the obvious, that I for one, didn't see! The ad that really gets me is the one for the yogurt that 'makes' you beautiful!
8 April at 20:51 via mobile · Unlike · 👍 1
- Melissa Gray O Toole** If it wasn't for advertisement in low fat food/butter healthy eating, we would be none the wiser, true men and children should be targeted. Who wouldn't love to see more fit guys on tv adds! Or maybe do adds of the reality of all the over weight obese people. People need to see the advertisements to be influenced to do something about it! A point about us all being a certain size is true but unique to are height- BMI and waist measurements.
10 April at 09:35 via mobile · Like
- Viola Cowan** No matter whether it's a cliché or not, anything to do with eating "healthy" or living a "healthy" lifestyle, will forever have the slimmer toned variety of men and women prancing about in the ad's because that, unfortunately, is what sells the product, and not the fact that the majority of low fat/sugar whatever products mainly taste crap, and is not necessarily any healthier! Eat anything you fancy in moderation people, be sensible and enjoy "GOOD" living, and still be healthy and happy in one go 😊
9 April at 13:06 via mobile · Like · 👍 3
- Barbara O'Sullivan** Well done Low Low and thank you from a large percentage of women in Ireland!!!!
15 May at 14:25 · Like
- Eilish Fitzgerald** Love the ad, nice to see the cliches satired, we are soooo tired of
14 April at 02:48 · Unlike · 👍 1
- Nikki Foy** Love the add very funny!!!!
14 April at 19:23 via mobile · Unlike · 👍 1
- Aniboox** Love the parody, love the satire, love this ad. Well done whoever made it 😊
10 April at 23:11 · Unlike · 👍 1
- Nicola Billis** Do you know what, I never eat yoghurts whilst prancing around in my underwear!! Do they have that effect on anyone??? Not me!! Love the ad, well done Low low x
9 April at 17:02 · Unlike · 👍 1
- Christiana Bissett** The point being made is that the food industry tends to advertise with stereotypical beauty, they are not saying there is anything wrong with her figure, rather that we shouldn't feel pressured into eating certain brands because we feel inadequate when faced with these stunning women. Its a really positive statement for women.
16 April at 12:19 · Like · 👍 1

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NEW LEARNINGS

This case study shows how breaking free from category norms and being brave enough to swim upstream can reap real rewards for a brand. It was all too easy to correlate a low fat brand with a false skinny promise. However, real success was found when the brand itself became more real and connected with women on their terms, championing a healthy attitude to life rather than some silly, out-dated notion of red dress perfectionism.

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SUMMARY

For a very long time, women felt judged by the low fat category. They did not connect with the skinny ideal it presented to them, and worse, felt insulted and diminished by it. This case study demonstrates how having a robust understanding of LowLow's consumer helped the brand team of Chemistry, Vizeum and the LowLow client team re-position the brand and create a communications campaign that really connected with women and changed the fortunes of the brand.

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MEDIA GALLERY

CREATIVE

