

Gold Winner: Integrated Campaign
Entrant: Twelve PR
Client: Metal Packaging Manufacturers Association

Giving the can a voice ...

In 2008 the can was fighting for its very survival. The UK's supermarkets had signed up to a narrow government-led initiative which aimed to reduce the **weight** of packaging sent to landfill. But the tin can was perceived to be 'heavy', and the fact that over two thirds of cans are recycled and avoid landfill altogether was simply not getting through to retailers.

While well informed supermarket environmental managers understood the can's supreme sustainability credentials, category managers were busy looking at alternative, lighter materials, much to the despair of can manufacturers and fillers.

Twelve PR was tasked with creating a high-impact activity aimed at retailers, and category managers in particular, to get the can and its unbeatable sustainability benefits back into play.

But supermarket category managers are hard to reach. Reacting daily to the ever-changing category landscape, they have numerous management boxes to tick with little room for manoeuvre. They are 'time poor' and suffer from information overload. What's more, the can's sustainability messages were complex and not easy to explain.

Our strategy comprised:

- an industry-wide metal packaging messaging workshop to identify key sustainability messages;
- stakeholder mapping to identify key individuals who were influencing sustainability decisions in supermarkets;
- a hard-hitting, fresh, appealing and memorable summer **direct mail** campaign with supporting **trade press ads** designed to:
 - present key messages in an eye-catching and memorable way;
 - drive stakeholders to an information microsite presenting key facts and statistics that would help them 'sell the can';
- development and implementation of a trade media relations campaign;
- a microsite: canfacts.org.uk.

The campaign was devised to present seven key sustainability-related messages to just **sixty key stakeholders** identified through our mapping as those whom we needed to reach.

The creative needed to:

- drive recipients to online resource for more info (www.canfacts.org.uk);
- stop recipients / readers in their tracks;
- deliver the 'unexpected';
- work across direct, ads and media relations;
- generate instant recall;
- be memorable;
- be clever;
- create a talking point – amongst retailers and metal packaging industry;
- get metal's key messages across to category managers;
- drive stakeholders to a central resource for further information;
- give sales teams a talking point;
- feature microsite URL.

The Campaign

The **seven key messages** were given a '**Lichtenstein**' treatment featuring a shopper's 'relationship' with the can. The speech or thought bubbles highlighted the shopper's innermost thoughts and were written to intrigue. The individual sustainability messages were then expanded on the reverse of the card and in the body copy of ads.

For example: a shopper gazing sadly and wistfully at can in hand with speech bubble saying: '***I wish you weren't so misunderstood***', and the reverse of the card reading: '***Packs with low recycling rates are the real landfill heavyweights***'.



Sets of different postcards were sent out in a tin to a select list of sixty stakeholders and each mailing was immediately followed by a full page ads in The Grocer magazine's '33' section, aimed specifically at supermarkets. The ad imagery used the same creative as the postcards with accompanying text expanding on the messages.

A bespoke microsite, www.canfacts.org.uk, was created containing facts and stats for use by supermarket sustainability and category managers to help them 'make

the case' for the can.

Stand alone features were placed in retail and packaging publications, such as Retail Packaging, to present the key messages.

Results

- Canfacts microsite received 1362 hits over campaign period - from a starting point of nil and targeting just 60 individuals.
- Hits increased immediately after each mailshot to just key stakeholders.
- The metal packaging sector (MPMA) was invited to become much more involved in the sustainability debate and is now a key contributor to ongoing initiatives such as Courtauld 2, and the Packaging Recycling Action Group.
- Speaker platforms achieved including Total (packaging exhibition) and The Grocer's Packaging Sustainability Forum
- Concessions on 'weight to landfill' were achieved with the Carbon Trust.
- The campaign has been so popular that sister European metal trade associations have adapted the theme for their countries.
- The campaign is now being extended in the UK across the DIY sector.

In short, the can found its voice.