

WILD ♣ CARD

1. Brief and objectives

The Eden Project in Cornwall, thanks to funding from the Department for International Development, undertook a project to raise awareness in the UK of the African superfruit Baobab. Eden worked in conjunction with Phytotrade Africa - a not-for-profit trade association. The aim of the project was to establish vital trade routes and generate sales of Baobab powder.

Wild Card worked alongside Eden's in-house project and marketing teams to elevate Project Baobab via a dedicated consumer PR campaign which ran between June 2013 – January 2014.

The three PR objectives:

- Drive sales of Eden Project Baobab
- Drive footfall to the launch of the inaugural Baobab Week at the Eden Project – October 8-13, 2013
- Educate consumers about Baobab's health credentials

2. Strategy and tactics

A pro-active and integrated PR and communications programme was essential and an eight-month campaign was devised under the strategy: Good for You, Good for Africa.

Our approach was collaborative, creative and multi-platformed. Communications began with early adopters: educators and influencers. Then consumers: nutrition/food-aware and ethical shoppers. This approach enabled us to tackle a cross-section of media with smart, tailored content.

To ensure ongoing trade opportunities, WC also conducted an NPD programme – suggesting Baobab as an ingredient.

All content across the campaign would communicate key messaging:

- Gram for gram, Baobab has more calcium than six oranges, more iron than steak and more calcium than milk
- Money from the sales of Eden's Baobab goes directly back to African Baobab harvesters
- It's easy to eat: sprinkled on yoghurts, add to smoothies or blend with curries

3. Implementation

Our toolkit:

- Health / science-based facts and stats, working with an approved nutritionist
- African farmer case studies
- Baobab recipes from the Eden Project chefs
- Recipes from, and media-facing time with, 'The African Chef' – a champion of Baobab in the UK
- Professionally-styled photography to drive further food and lifestyle coverage
- How-to recipe videos

Phase 1:

Key influencers - Information packs were sent to doctors and nutritionists to ensure that once media communication began, educators were fully aware of the facts and therefore able to affirm what we were supplying to press. Over 500 were contacted with samples and factsheets. Health and food websites / blogs followed.

Phase 2:

Consumer launch

Face-to-face journalist meetings (food and health) ensured the product was brought to life with homemade smoothies. All other target media received a creative delivery of 'make your own' smoothie packs. 25 bloggers also worked with us via product reviews and recipe challenges. Long lead titles were approached with 'January health' angles.

Baobab on the airways

Two pitches were developed for radio, specifically to reach our two core consumer groups: health conscious and ethically aware. Through Phytotrade we secured a Malawian farmer to drive the message. This was underpinned by a nutritionist and Eden spokesperson. Communication also encouraged listeners to join Baobab Week.

Reaching further

In addition to ongoing health messaging and product placement, shopping and food news pages were secured through the launch of Baobab Chocolate. This was held until the end of the campaign strategically to maintain momentum.

The healthiest cake in the world?

In order to maximise awareness of Baobab Week, WC created the 'Baobab Super Fruit Cake' and developed a dedicated photo story as a media hook. Extensive coverage was achieved in The Times, Stylist.co.uk, Daily Mirror and Huffington Post generating 43million OTS.

New product develop partnerships

WC introduced Baobab and Eden to 20 national businesses for potential NPD. Three are currently progressing into exciting new product SKUs.

4. Demonstration of marketing support in the public relations campaign

Our campaign was combined with a dedicated e-commerce programme, e-marketing and on-site branding, targeting the one million visitors a year to Eden via its 400,000 strong database. Project Baobab received dedicated space on www.edenproject.com and specific content was included in two editions of the quarterly Eden Project magazine (circ 3,500). The project was promoted to 70,000 fans on Facebook and 36,000 Twitter followers.

A range of Baobab products were sold in the Eden shop and online. New products using Baobab were also launched at Eden including Baobab Ice Lollies and Baobab Ice Cream.

5. Research, planning, measurement and evaluation

During the proposal stage we spent time with the Baobab project director and Phytotrade to learn what they wanted to achieve and undertook research into preferred media titles (on and offline) and building 'call to action' elements into the communications plan to help drive sales.

Summary of campaign outputs:

- Created 62.3 million OTS with 120 'purchase call-to-actions'
- 120 pieces of coverage across print, online and broadcast. Coverage highlights: GQ, Cosmopolitan, Men's Health, Vegetarian Living, guardian.co.uk, Women's Health
- One million listeners reached via Baobab Week regional radio day
- 30 online sites broadcasted the 'how-to' baobab pancake video and generated 8.7million OTS
- Blanket local coverage to drive footfall to the inaugural Baobab Week at the Eden Project
- Dedicated picture story resulted in coverage in more than six outlets with highlights being: The Times, Yahoo, Huffington Post, Stylist.co.uk
- The brand outreach activity secured three NPD partnerships

Evaluation against objectives

Sales

350 dedicated click-throughs to the online shop during the campaign period from generated coverage.

15,000 unit sales, an increase year-on-year of 1,069%. With 5p from every sachet of Baobab powder sold going straight to African communities, this is a campaign that has and will continue to make a difference.

Drive footfall to Baobab Week

During a normally quiet period the client reported a significant rise in footfall during Baobab Week against the same period in 2012.

Educating on the health benefits

More than 80% of the coverage generated included the health credential messaging.

6. Budget and cost effectiveness

PR Budget: £50,000 (excludes any costs associated with Eden's in-house team).

Using WC's Smart Media Index (numerical system evaluating editorial coverage; working on the basis of points, moving away from traditional AVE), WC was able to remain on target throughout the campaign. A full page in a national newspaper scores 90 points, so WC's campaign score of 2726 clearly demonstrates the value and success of Project Baobab.