



Category: Best Use of Photography or Design

Company: Tricker PR

Entry title: The Force is Strong with Star Wars Cocktails

Brief and objectives:

Dark Matter is the first and only rum distilled in Scotland. Dark Matter is described on the company website as;

“The taste equivalent of warping into a liquid black hole but without every atom in your body being crushed to an infinitely small point.”

“Our curiosity drives us while science inspires us. Combining knowledge and imagination we obsessively pursue flavour through systematic study, observation and experiment.”

The operation is a family run affair; the product is hand bottled and labelled on site in Banchory. The owners took a decision that they did not want to be photographed for any PR activity.

Our objectives were simple:

1. Differentiate Dark Matter from the ‘pirates and parrots’ rum on the market; keeping the pseudo-scientific and quirky brand essence and thus increasing the brand’s profile
2. Deliver coverage pre-Christmas to allow for gift sales
3. Stick within the £2,000 budget.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Starting in November, we knew that we’d struggle for ‘Christmas’ related coverage due to saturation and also deadlines for gift guides had mostly passed.

We needed something which could take Dark Matter into a galaxy far, far away from its competitors – marking it out as the hipster choice against other rums and also against an explosive Scottish craft gin scene.

We turned to the pre-Christmas news agenda – or at least the part of the news agenda without jingle bells – and found that the launch of Rogue One: A Star Wars Story was imminent. We reckoned the media force could be strong with a suite of Star Wars Dark Matter cocktails.

Differentiation from pirate and parrot rums? Tick.
Pseudo-scientific and quirky? Tick.

Pre-Christmas guaranteed? Tick.

Only one small problem ... Would Disney/Lucasfilm sue if we 'piggy backed' on Star Wars? They are notoriously protective of their intellectual property?

Cue some in depth research into legal issues and much use of "A Legal Guide To Making Star Wars Tributes."

Inspired by a great Jedi master who once said, 'do or do not; there is no try,' we were [reasonably ...] confident that we were on the right side of 'tributes' but the client still had to take a couple of brave pills and give the overall go ahead.

We had no worries there, though - the man who had brought rum distilling to the heart of whisky country said; 'fear is the path to the dark side.'

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

There was no way to avoid it ... it became a pun fest to come up with the best names for Star Wars cocktails... finally shortlisted from around 30 to:

- Wookie Fuzzball
- Kessel Rum
- Dark Vader
- Obi Rum

Now all that remained was to find the galaxy's most exciting mixologists to create four brand new cocktails to accompany Rogue One: A Star Wars Story.

Identifying the hippest cocktail creators this side of the Mos Eisley Cantina to create the perfect interstellar cocktails – with not a drop of blue milk in sight – we approached Mayfair celeb haunt Mahiki, who were so excited by the concept that they bought bottles of Dark Matter locally to participate.

To gain coverage more local to the distillery, subterranean speakeasy The Tippling House in Aberdeen and upmarket The Station Hotel in the Speyside were also approached. All were given a name and asked to provide a knock out cocktail recipe which would also be highly visual. Staggeringly good photography was always at the heart of our strategy.

Implementation of tactics:

With the immovable deadline of film launch day approaching, we worked at lightspeed to source props and to book one of Scotland's best whisky photographers – who welcomed the chance to switch spirit.

A series of individual glasses were purchased and a Darth Vader stencil created (like a coffee filter on top of a cappuccino). A shopping trip for various exotic fruits for garnish nearly failed on a snowy day in Keith on the way to Rothes for the photoshoot ... fresh pineapples are in short supply in Speyside in December it would seem...

Under the direction of Tricker PR staff and with a brief to take the shots into another galaxy, John Paul produced an outstanding suite of images, delivering Jedi mind tricks for the eyes.

The press release and images were issued on 9.12.16 ahead of the film's launch on 15.12.16. The release included full recipes for each cocktail.

Genius, serendipity or extra sensory perception? The shot for the Kessel Rum cocktail – launched a week before the film– featured a light effect remarkably similar to those in a classic Star Wars scene. **(See attached examples)**

Although we suspect the Star Wars lighting cost more than ours ... created with a small strand of battery operated LED fairy lights ... from The Pound Shop.
The image suite speaks for itself.

Media lists were drawn up to include consumer lifestyle, men's interest, daily and weekly newspapers, food and drink and trade – with a focus on digital both for speed and to hit the target audience which is mainly male 25 – 50. It was also anticipated that digital outlets would use a carousel of images.

Example of photography or design. Please confirm in the text box below that this has been included within your supporting document:

Attached

Measurement and evaluation:

There were 33 pieces of online coverage and 12 print articles including The Daily Record, Press and Journal and Scottish Licensed Trade News.

Online coverage was independently evaluated through digital tool 'Coverage Book'.

Estimated online readership 1.33 million

Estimated views 482k

Social shares 3.83k

Links back to Darkmatterdistillers.com 17 equating to 58.6%

Average domain authority 46 (although many such as Daily Record were around 80.

Scotsman food and drink - 83)

All outlets used the photography – with some supplementing this with images of Star Wars characters associated with the cocktail names.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

The campaign was delivered for the agreed budget of £2,000 which included all creative work, liaison with cocktail bars, all photography and media relations.

Although we do not have actual figures, the client told us that during the campaign, order increased significantly and they were frantically bottling as late as Christmas Eve.