

Making Yorkshire Tea Proper Successful

Marketing Society Excellence Awards
Category - Marketing Communications

Summary

The standard black tea market is a tough place to create switching and growth. It's in decline, it's led by two brands that go back generations (PG Tips and Tetley) and it's one of the most habitual, low-interest FMCG categories there is.

Nonetheless, growth was exactly what we needed to create for Yorkshire Tea. The brand was a cult favourite and occupied the third position in the market, but wasn't content to remain there.

That meant we needed to look beyond Yorkshire's current fans to the 'Sleep shopping' buyers of PG and Tetley, cutting through their apathy and waking them up to Yorkshire Tea's merits.

So we created a new campaign based on the idea that Yorkshire Tea is a place 'Where everything's done proper', and proved it by hiring some of Yorkshire's most talented celebrities to perform jobs around the factory. The Brownlee Brothers became Yorkshire Tea's new couriers, the Kaiser Chiefs performed their hold music live in reception and Sir Michael Parkinson was brought on board to interview new recruits.

This idea cut through to PG and Tetley buyers and radically changed their perceptions of the Yorkshire Tea brand. Yorkshire Tea immediately began to grow and quickly overtook Tetley to take the number two spot in the market, setting its sights on the leader PG Tips.

Thanks to the 'Where Everything's Done Proper' campaign Yorkshire Tea was transformed from a cult favourite into a national treasure and performed the near impossible feat of changing shoppers' tea-buying habits of a lifetime.

Word count - 253

Introduction

This is the story of how a new advertising campaign helped Yorkshire Tea take its next big step, transforming it from a cult favourite into a genuine national treasure that could challenge for market leadership.

The business challenge – break the shopping habit of a lifetime

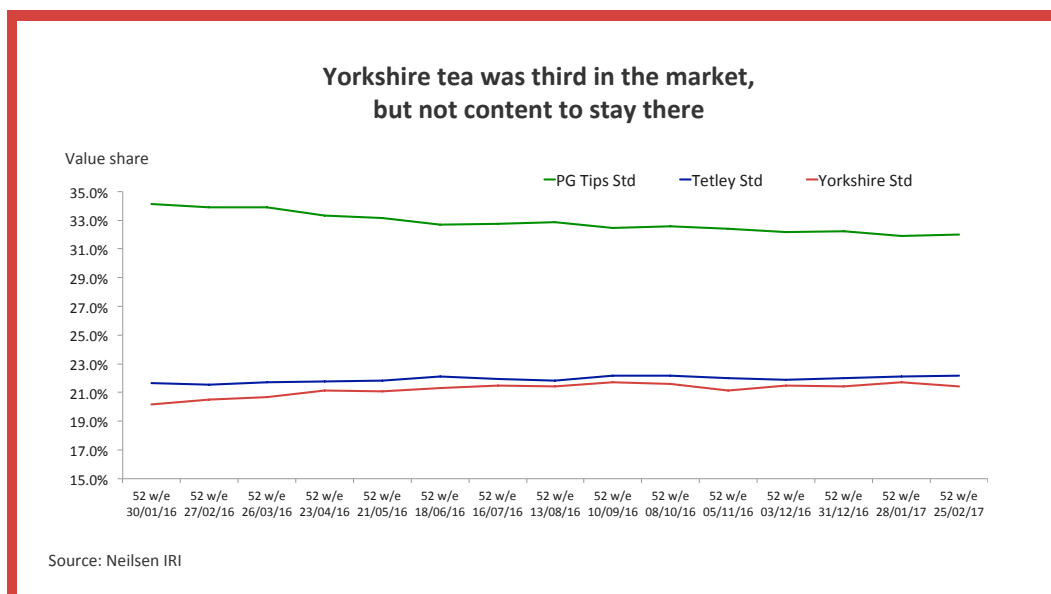
We should start by pointing out that standard black tea is a VERY hard market in which to create growth.

First, it's a market in long-term decline. Older tea drinkers are dying off and kids aren't picking up the habit. Total sales of standard black tea dropped by a terrifying 22% between 2012 and 2016, from £480M to just £374M¹.

Second, tea is one of the most habitual purchases there is. People basically buy the same tea they grew up with for the rest of their lives. It is very, very difficult to get these 'Sleep shoppers' to switch brands².

And third, tea has two incredibly strong market leaders who have built-up decades of equity in the minds of the public. Tetley with their Tea Folk (who first appeared in 1973) and PG Tips with their Monkey character (a decade old property who connects to their famous Chimps campaign dating back to 1957!)

Given this backdrop, Yorkshire Tea had done remarkably well for itself since 2011. Careful brand stewardship, a strong-tasting product, and vocal celebrity fans³ had helped it rise to third place in the market. But Yorkshire had been in third place for years, and was no longer content to remain there.



¹ Mintel

² Multiple Yorkshire Tea qualitative studies

³ Celebrity fans of Yorkshire Tea include Noel Gallagher, Russell Crowe and Ozzy Osbourne.

So an ambitious new objective was set: To finally overtake Tetley and begin the long-term challenge for the top spot.

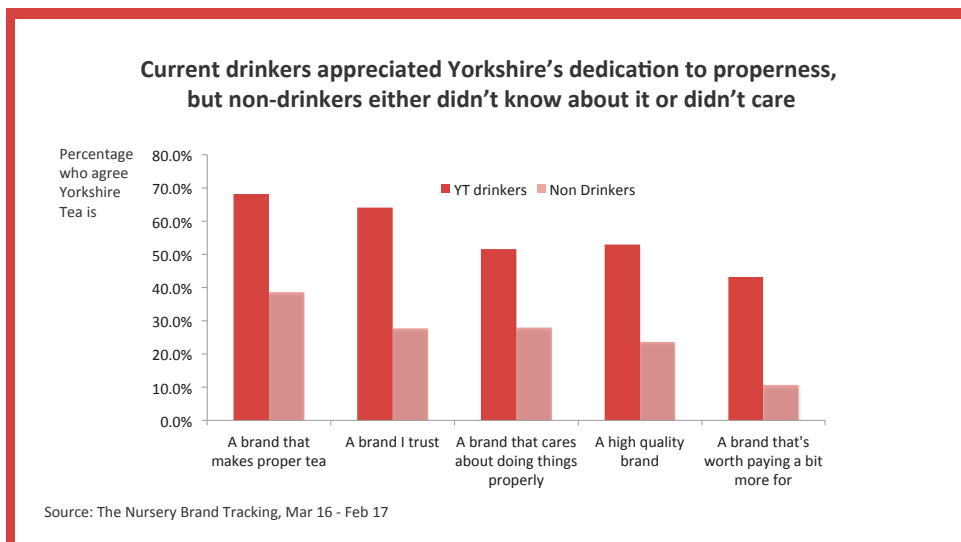
The communications strategy – Make Yorkshire’s ‘Proper-ness’ culturally famous

Yorkshire Tea are able to make a better brew because they ‘Do things proper’. Doing things proper means doing things right. It means working side by side with Kenyan farmers to find the best tasting leaves, taste-testing 1000 cups of tea a day, developing a special blend for hard water areas... You know, generally going the extra mile wherever bigger brands would save money and cut corners.

This philosophy was emblazoned on the walls of Yorkshire Tea’s headquarters and instilled in the hearts of everyone who worked there.



The problem was, outside the company and its loyal cult of existing buyers, no one really knew or appreciated this. The gap between drinker and non-drinker perceptions of the brand was huge.



And comparing this perception gap to the two leaders proved how much of a cult success Yorkshire Tea was. The gap between drinker and non-drinker opinion was much less polarised for PG Tips and Tetley than it was for Yorkshire Tea.

Brand	Average perception gap between drinkers and non drinkers
Yorkshire	32 percentage points
PG Tips	25 percentage points
Tetley	22 percentage points

Source: The Nursery Brand tracking Mar 2016 – Feb 17

It was obvious that we needed to find a new way to break through to non-drinkers and wake them up to Yorkshire Tea’s beliefs. To make them not only *take notice* of Yorkshire’s dedication to doing things proper, but *be persuaded by it to switch*.

We needed to make Yorkshire’s proper-ness *culturally famous*.

The idea – A place where *everything’s done proper*

The creative idea we came up with was simple. At Yorkshire Tea, we reasoned, they do *everything* proper. And that philosophy must even extend beyond the tea-making process to other jobs – the kind you’d find at any company.

So perhaps we could make Yorkshire’s philosophy famous by showing that at Yorkshire Tea, even these support jobs were done proper as well.

And the best way of doing that would be to hire some of Yorkshire’s most talented celebrities to do them!

For instance, if Yorkshire Tea needed new delivery boys, they’d hire the Brownlee brothers – the Olympic medal winning triathletes – to carry packages from one part of the factory to the other.



(Brownlee Brothers ad: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lo2_J3BR7IU)

If Yorkshire Tea needed some new hold music, they'd get the Kaiser Chiefs – the famous band from Leeds – to perform it live next to the receptionist



(Kaiser Chiefs ad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gb3mFGkKzn4>)

And if Yorkshire Tea needed some interviews doing they'd get the master of friendly questioning - Sir Michael Parkinson himself – to chat to the new recruits.



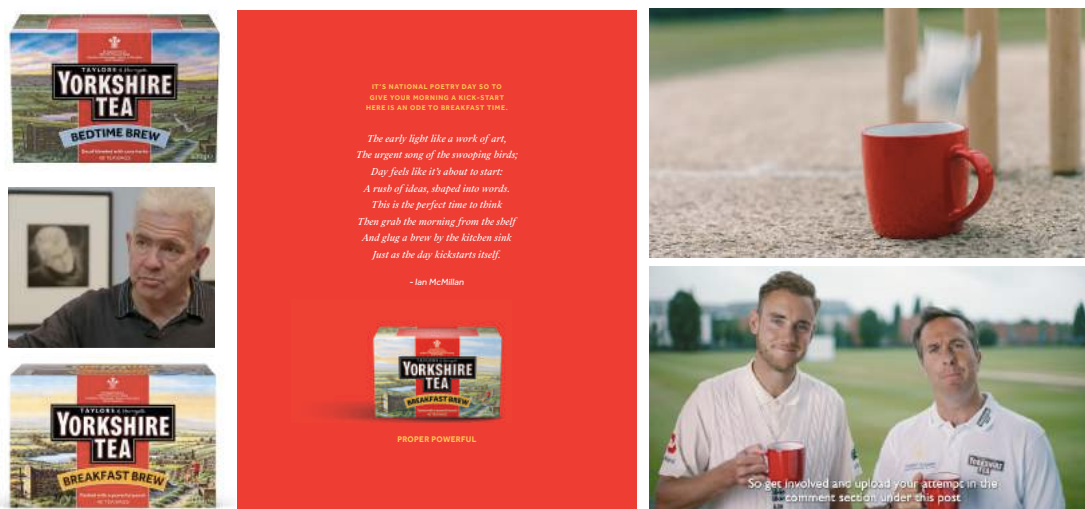
(Parkinson ad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2oz2aumbi4>)

These celebrities were carefully chosen to fit three overlapping criteria. They had to be from Yorkshire, to ensure strong branding and keep the Yorkshire faithful happy. They had to be national treasures (so they would appeal to our sleep shopping non drinkers around the country). And they had to be recognised experts at what we were asking them to do (so they would emphasise our belief in doing things proper).

All the ads ended with the same line: ‘Yorkshire Tea - where *everything’s* done proper’.

We used our new idea to launch Yorkshire’s new ‘Daypart’ brews as well, hiring a famous Yorkshire Poet to write radio ads that would give radio listeners a proper wake-up call, a proper break and a proper bedtime slumber.

And we promoted Yorkshire’s involvement with cricket by getting Stuart Broad and Michael Vaughan to demonstrate ‘Bowling done proper’ (bowling a Yorkshire teabag into a mug), and then inviting cricket fans to do the same.



(Using ‘Where Everything’s Done Proper’ to launch daypart brews and promote cricket sponsorship)

‘Where everything’s done proper’ celebrated Yorkshire’s philosophy in a fun and famous way that even sleep-shopping PG and Tetley buyers couldn’t ignore.

And our media strategy amplified the effect of the idea.

Having multiple shorter TV executions (rather than the single 60 of previous campaigns) meant we could maintain a more continuous presence so we were always talking to non-buyers just before they went out to the shops. We were on-air 16 out of 40 weeks from March 2017 to the end of Jan 2018⁴.

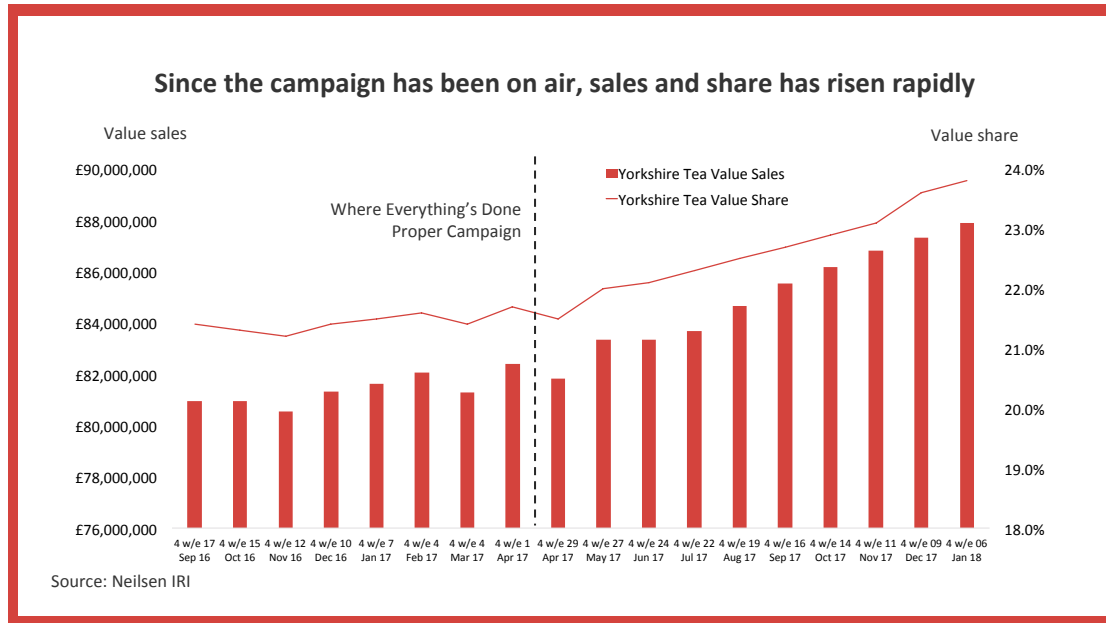
We overspent in cheaper months, giving us more bang for our buck and allowing us to make properness even more famous.

⁴ Goodstuff communications

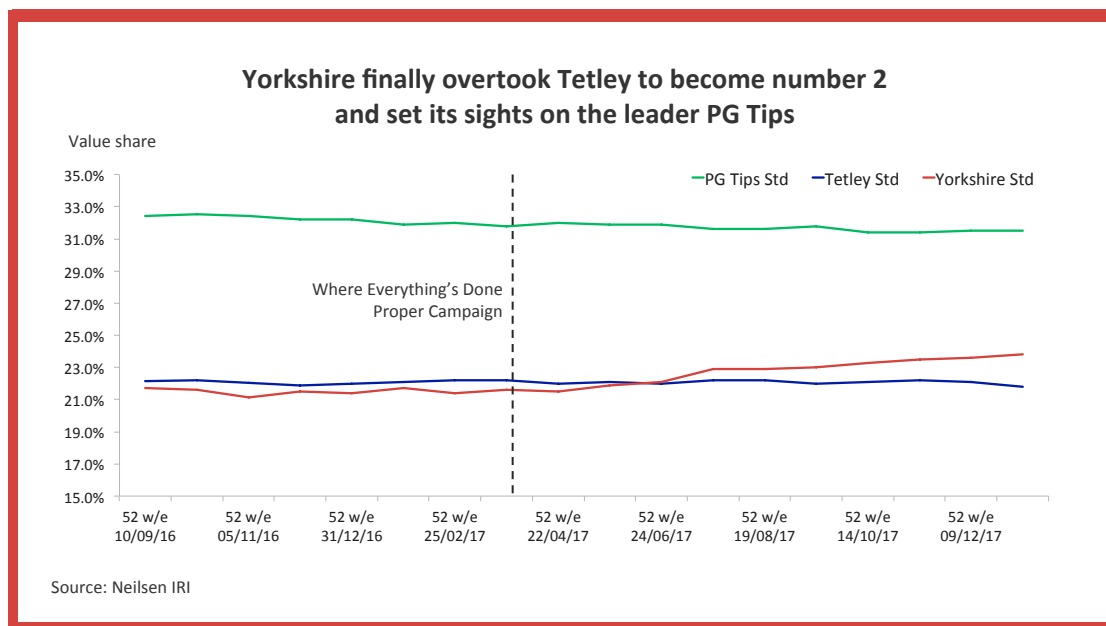
And we up-weighted the plan with VOD to reach younger consumers so we could switch them onto Yorkshire before their tea-buying habits were set for life.

Results – Yorkshire Tea surged past Tetley and set its sights on PG

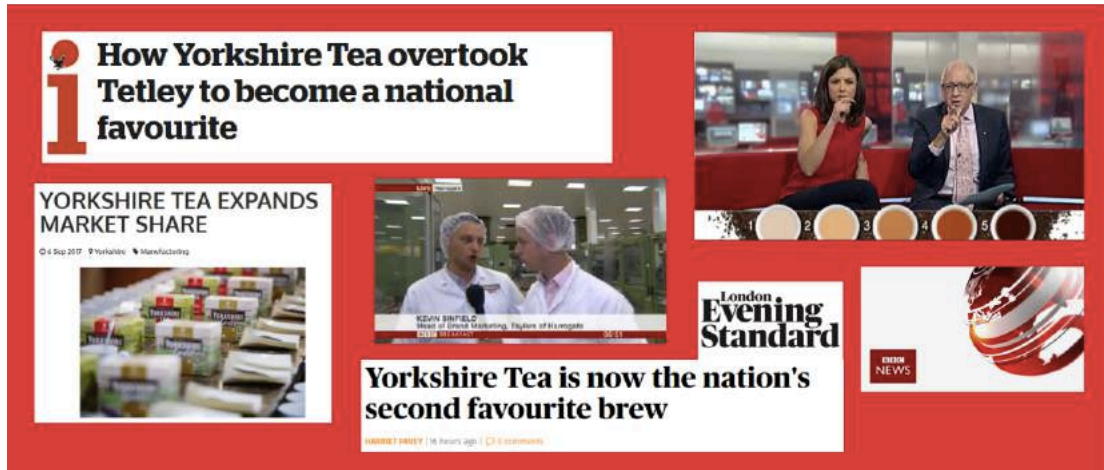
Almost immediately after ‘Where everything’s done proper’ went on-air, Yorkshire Tea sales and share began to rise rapidly, and they have risen every month since.



Yorkshire finally overtook Tetley to claim the number 2 spot in the market and put PG Tips firmly in its sights.



This change in the nation’s tea buying habits was so unprecedented it became national news.



PR coverage of Yorkshire's sales increase (Source: FINN PR)

We will now prove that 'Where everything's done proper' was responsible for these remarkable results, breaking through to PG and Tetley sleep-shoppers and convincing them to switch.

1. The new campaign generated buzz far beyond current buyers

Given the cult status of Yorkshire Tea you'd expect existing drinkers to love any new work from the brand. But the scale of response showed we were going far beyond the Yorkshire cult – with the TV ads being shared far more than previous campaigns. Yorkshire Tea became the 6th buzziest brand in the whole of the UK for 2017.

'Where Everything's Done Proper' created huge buzz and Yorkshire Tea became the 6th most talked about brand nationally in 2017

PR coverage of the campaign generated

41,552,431 OTS

5,746,000 organic views of the ads

68,700 shares

7% engagement rate
(Reactions, likes, comments, shares)

Source: FINN PR, Yorkshire Tea social media team, YouGov Brandindex

BrandIndex Buzz Rankings: Top 10 brands
Over the past two weeks, which of the following brands have you heard something positive/negative about (whether in the news, through advertising, or talking to friends and family)? Scores averaged across 62 weeks of 2017

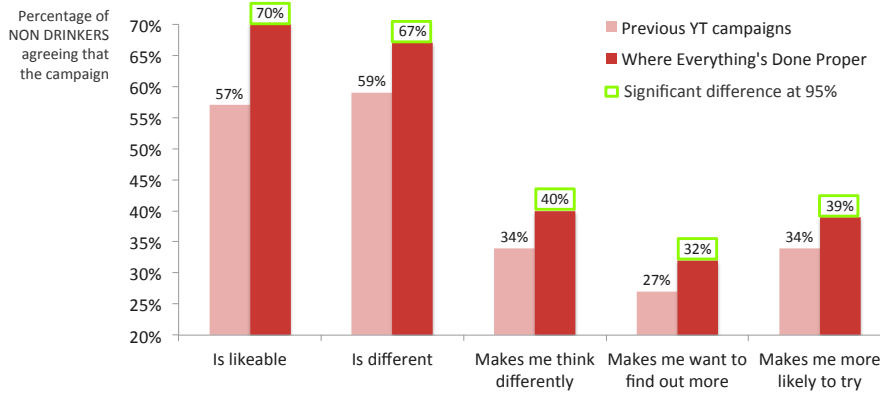
Rank	Brand	Score
1	Aldi	18.1
2	Lidl	14.5
3	Netflix	14.0
4	BBC iPlayer	13.2
5	MoneySavingExpert.com	12.6
6	Yorkshire Tea	11.0
7	IKEA	10.5
8	Marks & Spencer	10.2
9	PayPal	10.1
10	Premier Inn	9.4

Source: YouGov BrandIndex, January 2018

2. The campaign cut-through to non-drinkers much better than previous work

Campaign response showed how effective 'Where everything's done proper' was at breaking through to non-drinkers. Past Yorkshire Tea work had performed well on these measures, but the new campaign was significantly better.

Where Everything's Done Proper was far more effective at breaking through to Non Drinkers than past Yorkshire Tea campaigns had been

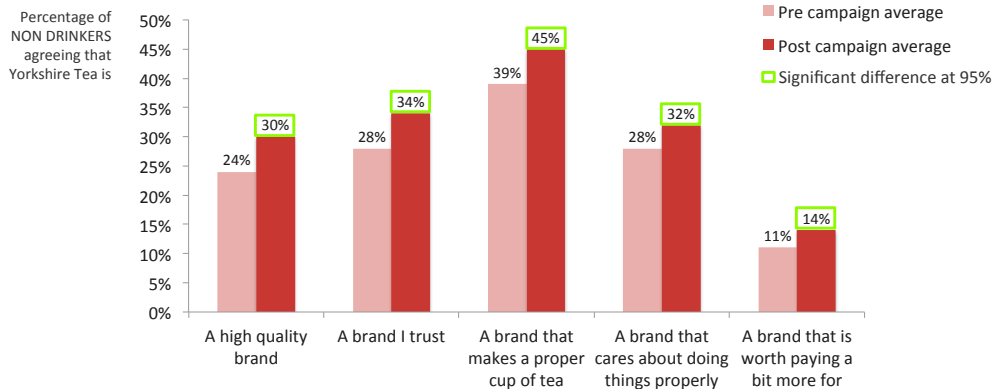


Source: The Nursery Brand Tracking
Previous campaigns ran from 2013 to 2016

3. The campaign improved non-drinker perceptions of Yorkshire Tea

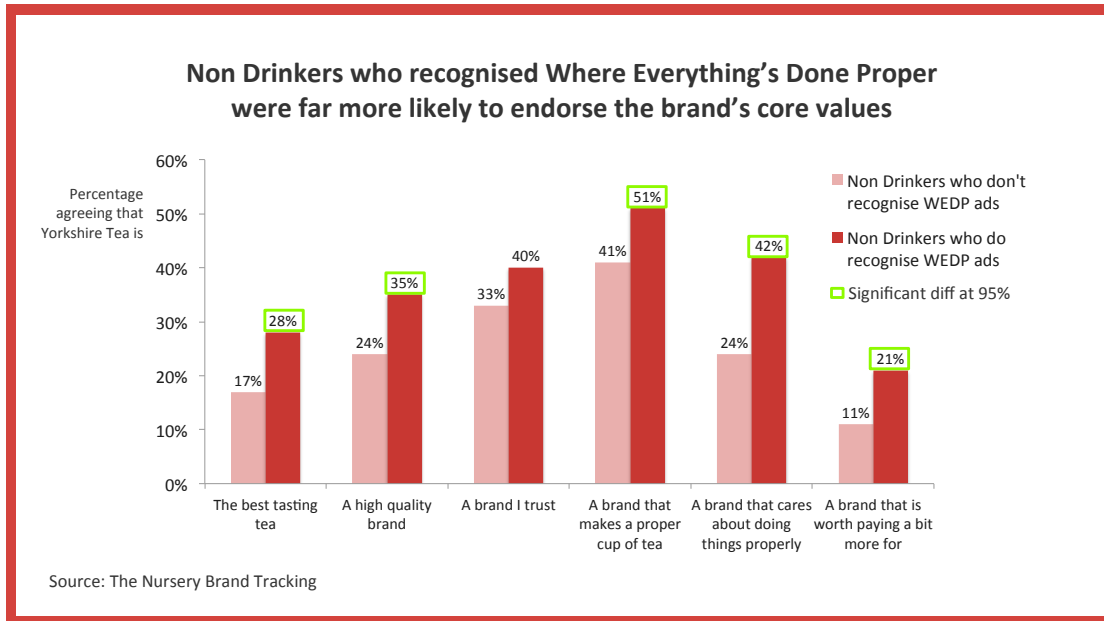
Tracking showed that non-drinkers hadn't just noticed the campaign, *it had changed their views of Yorkshire Tea as a brand.* We saw large increases on all brand measures versus pre-campaign waves.

Where Everything's Done Proper significantly improved how Non Drinkers felt about the Yorkshire Tea brand



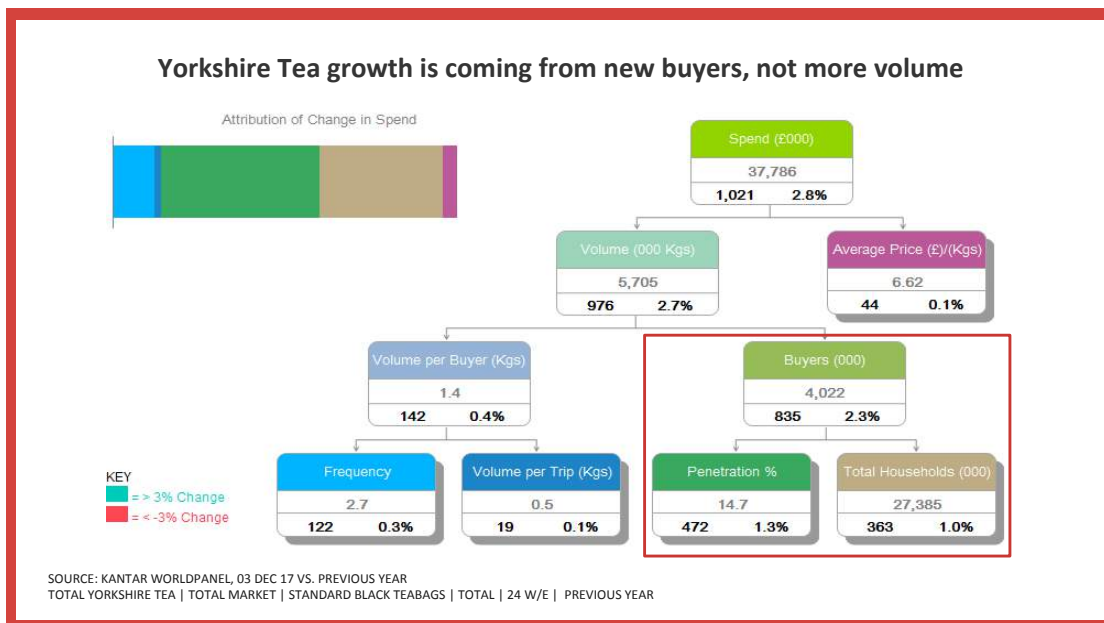
Source: The Nursery Brand Tracking
Pre campaign average Mar 16 – Feb 17, Post campaign average Mar 17 to date

And crucially, *improvements in brand perception were even more pronounced amongst those non-drinkers who recognised the ads,* suggesting that it was the campaign itself that had changed their opinions, rather than any other factors.



4. Non-drinkers began switching to Yorkshire Tea in large numbers

As the below Kantar data shows, all these changes in perception fed through into real-life behaviour. The vast majority of the recorded sales increase for Yorkshire Tea came from penetration growth and new households as non-buyers switched into the brand.



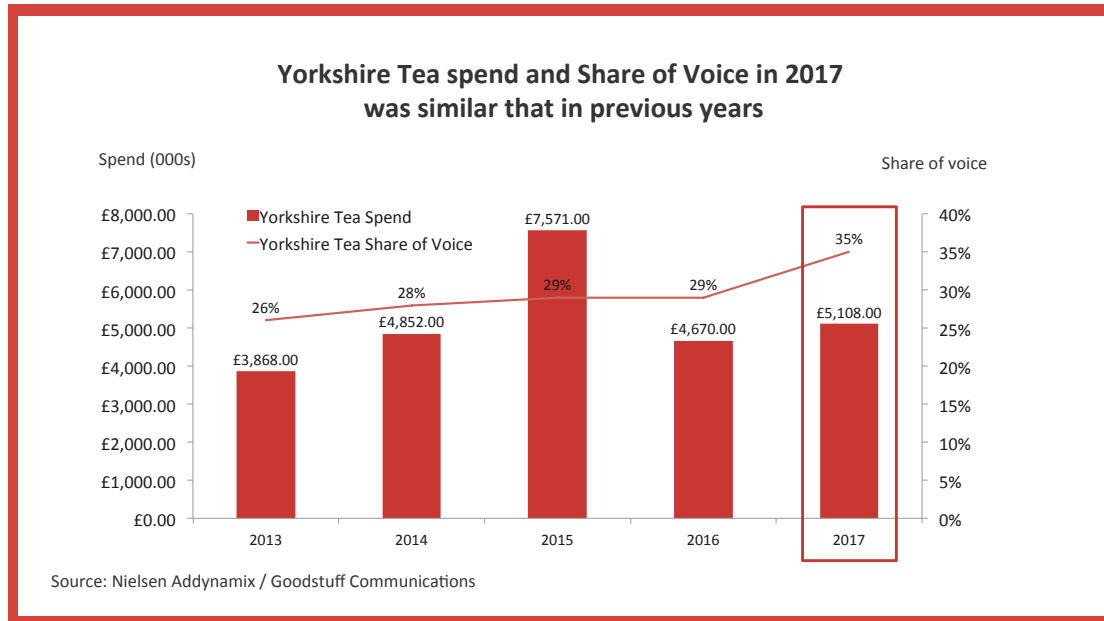
Ruling out other factors

Could anything else have accounted for the huge surge in sales and share that Yorkshire Tea experienced during the campaign period?

Media weight?

Did we just spend our way to success?

No. The amount spent on the ‘Where everything’s done proper’ campaign was actually smaller than that invested in some previous years. And Yorkshire Tea’s overall share of voice was broadly in line with historic levels.



Pricing?

Because of the weakness of the pound caused by Brexit and the fact that tea comes from overseas the cost of sourcing tea went up and all tea brands were forced to increase their prices during 2017.

However as the data shows, Yorkshire’s increases were in in line with those of the market leaders, and so cannot have given it any particular advantage.

Brand	Av £/kilo 52 w/e 7 Jan 2017	Av £/kilo 52 w/e 6 Jan 2018	Increase
PG Tips	£6.47	£6.75	4.4%
Tetley	£5.96	£6.24	4.7%
Yorkshire Tea	£7.78	£8.19	5.2%

Source: Nielsen IRI

In fact the sudden growth in Yorkshire Tea sales is all the more impressive given shoppers were being asked to pay with more for their daily cuppa!

In-store promotion?

Did Yorkshire use promotional mechanics to gain sales and share?



No. Again thanks to the competitive nature of the market all brands increased their rates of promotion in 2017 but once again Yorkshire was in line with the trend.

Brand	% deal 52 w/e 28 Jan 2017	% deal 52 w/e 6 Jan 2018	Increase
PG Tips	80%	81.30%	1.3%
Tetley	74.8%	78.3%	3.5%
Yorkshire Tea	58.6%	61.5%	2.9%

Source: Nielsen IRI

These small differences in promotional activity amongst the three brands cannot account for Yorkshire Tea's sudden growth. Indeed Tetley, which Yorkshire Tea overtook during the campaign period, was promoting itself more heavily and should have gained sales as a result!

Conclusion

There comes a point in any brand's growth when it has to step up and challenge the leaders. By 2017, Yorkshire Tea had reached that point, and therefore faced the massive task of jolting PG and Tetley sleep-shoppers out of the habit of a lifetime.

Our campaign was more than equal to the task. By showing that Yorkshire Tea is a place 'Where Everything's Done Proper' we made Yorkshire's dedication to quality culturally famous. The campaign turned a cult favourite into a national treasure, bringing tens of thousands of buyers into the brand and creating a surge in sales that propelled Yorkshire Tea past Tetley to become a firm number 2 and allowing it to set its sights on the top spot.

Word count - 1809