



**From boutiques to grocers:
How Godiva democratised luxury**

GODIVA
Belgium 1926

Marketing Society Excellence Awards

Brand Extension

Executive Summary

This is the story of how Godiva, a niche brand in the UK, looked beyond their traditional chocolate boutique stores and exploded into everyday luxury – into supermarkets.

This was a brand extension that didn't just drive sales for Godiva, it grew the premium chocolate category.

Unusually, Godiva didn't try to entice people to switch from competitors. Instead the strategy successfully brought new people into the premium chocolate category. This was a whole new audience of younger, more affluent 'experience lovers' entering the world of Godiva and premium chocolate.

The disruptive campaign successfully inspired mainstream chocolate lovers to '**DIVE IN**' to Godiva Masterpieces – a new product inspired by iconic chocolates from the boutiques and redesigned for the grocery channel - with the seductive promise that 'Chocolate Never Felt So Good'.

Artistic, dynamic, vibrant and modern, the multi-touchpoint campaign not only broke category conventions, it broke the luxury paradox, achieving the utopia of being both aspirational and accessible.

Given the strength of our significantly better known and much-loved competitors, the results were extraordinary. Arriving in Sainsbury's in September 2017, Godiva doubled their expected four-month sales target.

It was also a positive for the category as a whole. By bringing in a new, younger audiences to premium chocolate, Godiva contributed an astonishing **97%** of category growth for Sainsbury's.

This remarkable launch came from a brand starting from scratch in the grocery channel, with just 10 boutique stores concentrated in South East England and a modest 18% brand awareness pre-launch.¹

Godiva has proven that you can democratise luxury successfully; achieving mass sales, whilst always keeping luxury credentials at the beating heart of the brand.

290 words

¹ TNS, 2017

INTRODUCTION

It was time for Godiva, a niche luxury brand known for expertly crafted Belgian chocolate, to enter select, mainstream channels.

Godiva had ten small-but-perfectly-formed boutique stores, and a handful of concessions selling beautifully crafted Belgian chocolate. The vision was to become widely available in grocers across not just the UK (our focus here), but also the entire world. For Godiva, this was a brave shift from luxury boutique chocolate to **everyday luxury**, where they would be sold in the **premium chocolate** category.

Some might simply take the chocolate from the boutiques and put it in supermarkets, at a discount, in the hope a price deal will entice shoppers to switch competitors. It could work for that one-off sales peak, but it won't build a brand. Most likely it will get you de-listed.

The right strategy:

- Celebrate the luxury specialness of Godiva
- Create a new product that's perfect for everyday luxury
- Partner with the right supermarket and position the product at the right price
- Side-step brand-loyalists and instead seduce a **new** audience to grow the entire category
- Then prove repeat sales to fully establish Godiva as long-term brand that grocers want.

LAUNCH OBJECTIVES

The business vision:

To democratise luxury and expand the brand from ten luxury boutique stores, to become a widely available premium chocolate sold in grocers across the world.

The UK business objective:

Gain 10% market share of the premium chocolate category by 2020, cementing our position as a long-term contender in the grocery channel.

Marketing objectives:

Within the nine months of launch

- Increase brand awareness from 18% to 25%
- Avoid 'mainstream dilution' by maintaining the important premium brand perceptions of 'high quality products' and 'worth paying more for', which currently stood at 14% and 8% respectively.
- Drive £1.5m sales in the first four months of launch

The vision was clear, and sound. But to take a brand so steeped in tradition and elegance into grocers would still take bravery. Previously attempted in the US some years before, it had been an awakening to the dangers of taking luxury mainstream. This had to be done right.



CREATING MASTERPIECES, GODIVA'S BRAND EXTENSION

To meet the objectives meant designing a product suitable for the grocery channel – in product, in packaging, and in price. But to be sustainable, this couldn't just be a 'copy and paste' of the chocolate sold in the boutiques. Nor could the product lose its luxury.

Cue '**Masterpieces**'. A new range of Godiva chocolates, in multiple grocery-friendly formats, all inspired by Godiva's most iconic boutique-sold Belgian chocolate. The Research & Development team had surpassed themselves.

The next two challenges lay in:

- 1) Understanding the audience for Masterpieces and unlocking the insight that would inspire them to buy into the promise of **everyday luxury**.
- 2) Developing an approach that would kept the tricky balance of being aspirational and accessible, whilst also creating disruption in the market.

FINDING A NEW AUDIENCE

To extend from boutiques to grocers successfully, Godiva had to find their audience.

Pivotaly, Godiva would not settle for switchers

Lindt has done an incredible job in building a cohort of loyalists. It's a much-loved brand, scoring in the 99th percentile for positivity.²

Yet, Godiva couldn't rely on switchers. Nor did they want to. To build a long-term, sustainable brand that grocers wanted to stock, they needed to grow the category, not just shift people within it.

Audience data showed that just 27% of Lindt shoppers were under 45, with the majority being low to mid-affluent.³

The intended audience for this brand extension, and the key to success, would be younger and more affluent.

² YouGov, 2017

³ TNS, 2017



RESEARCH & INSIGHTS

Extensive research helped us to understand how we strike the right balance between being aspirational and accessible. Figure 1 shows a snapshot of the research conducted.

- **Ethnographic audience research**
WhatsApp acted as an agile research tool to understand people's day-to-day lives and the role of chocolate within that. Along with daily questions, early positioning and campaign ideas were sense-checked directly and with speed.
- **Global audience deep-dive**
A mix of qualitative and quantitative research conducted by Flamingo Research uncovered the needs, wants and motivations of our audience.
- **Trends immersion**
Trends insight brought a deep and rich understanding of the trends shaping our audience's lives.
- **Expert 'chocolate taster' interviews**
Time was spent with expert chocolate tasters, bringing an understanding of the unique flavour profile of Godiva Masterpieces.

Key research findings

- **A shift from having, to being:** The move from materialism to experiences is particularly true of our younger target audience.
- **Extremes are the new moderation:** The modern world has brought a myriad of choice. But counter to this is a desire for experiences that are felt with full intensity, meaning people have to select and choose. Abstain or indulge completely.
- **Chocolate is no mindless munch:** Summed up by the *Bake-Off* catch phrase, '*is it worth the calories?*', this 'all-in, or all-out' attitude heightens with chocolate. Our audience wants a chocolate that's worth it. If it is, they will dive in fully.
- **Eating Godiva brings an uplift:** Chocolate by its very nature is a neurone-firing, endorphin-stimulating, pulse-quickening experience which is taken to an even higher level by the luxurious intensity of Godiva.

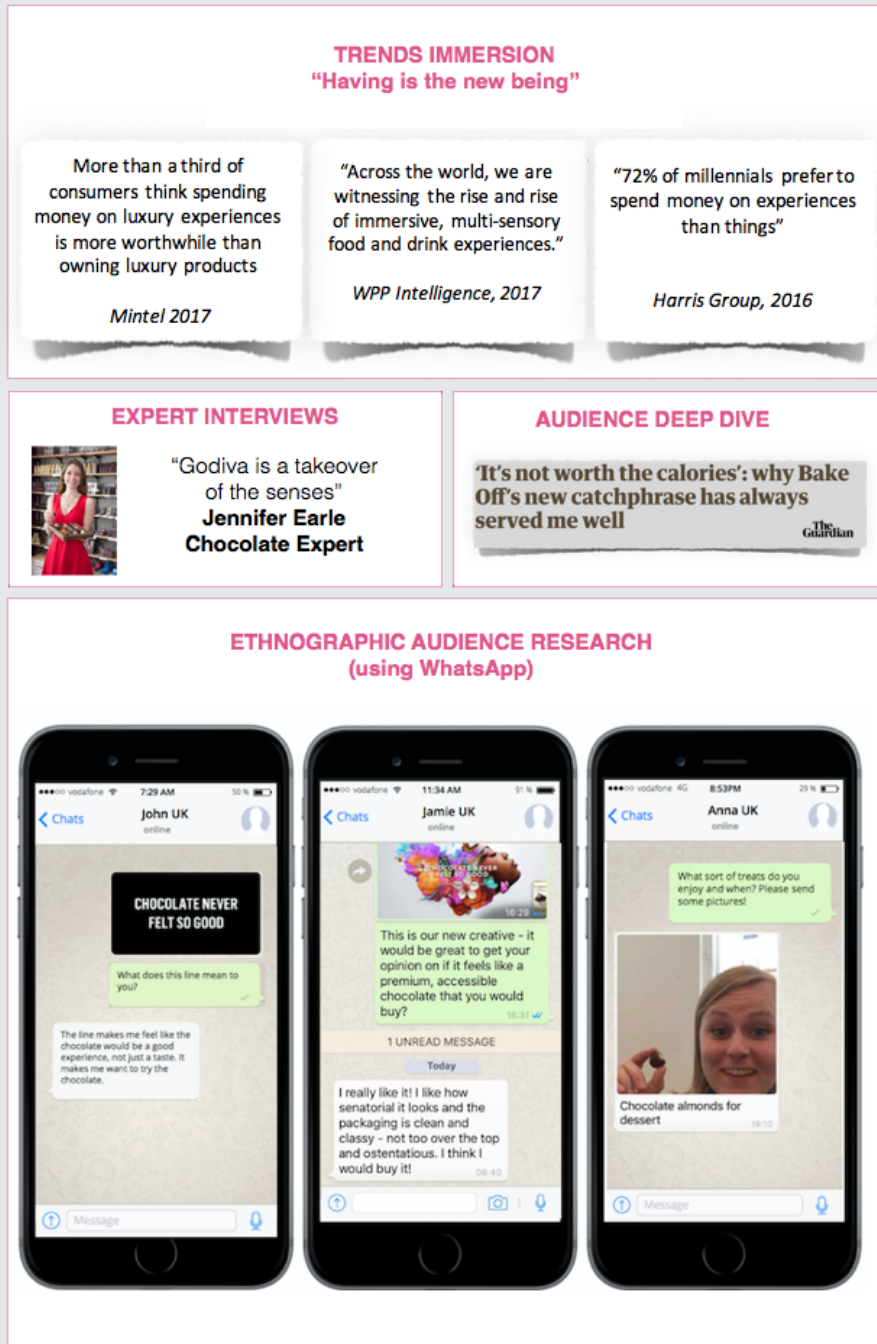
The audience insight:

The audience was named **EXPERIENCE LOVERS**, and they seek **Mindful Indulgence**.

"I don't want to live in the middle. When I want something, I go for it fully, immerse myself in it and feel good - otherwise I don't do it at all."



Fig 1. Research and insight



CAMPAIGN APPROACH

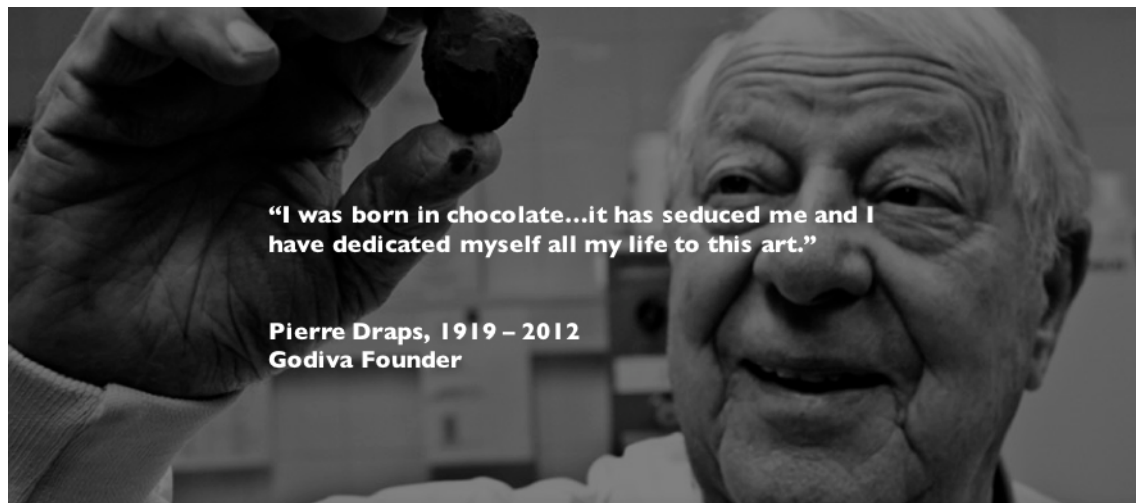
As a new challenger brand, disruption was essential

Chocolate is a category steeped in convention; from the Flake girl's slow indulgence, to Lindt's Master Chocolatier carefully and precisely measuring out ingredients, to Ferrero's luxury layers.

Masterpieces needed to stand out from such conventions, yet still resonate with Experience Lovers, and maintain Godiva's luxury credentials.

To meet this challenge, four '**Disruption Principles**' were developed. These gave rise to a tonality that would stand out in the premium space successfully, whilst building, not breaking, the Godiva brand. They would apply not just to communications, but to all packaging and future product development.

1. With artistry, instead of precision



Whilst other premium chocolate brands focus on the precise measurements and exactitude of making chocolate, Godiva, as it had always done, would celebrate the artistry of chocolate, over the science. Just like the wonderful shopfronts of the boutique stores, communications would feel artistic, creative and full of beauty.

2. With vibrancy, instead of passivity

The convention in premium chocolate is to use dark, muted, passive tones.

Instead, this campaign would be a colourful, first-hand experience, vibrant and visceral – reflecting the experience of eating Masterpieces.

3. With intensity, instead of gentle relaxation

The image of the girl leaning back, taking a slow, relaxing bite of chocolate is familiar.

But interviews with experts revealed this as the antithesis of the Godiva experience which brings intensity, not relaxation.

4. *With modernity, instead of traditional luxury*

“The Godiva brand is overwhelmingly read through the lens of luxury... baked in with old European cues of elegance, luxury and nobility”⁴

These luxury credentials needed to be embraced, but to cut through and resonate this campaign needed a modern take on luxury. This would still be elegant and stylish, but with an injection of energy and dynamism.

THE STRATEGIC PLATFORM

Experience Lovers are all or nothing, mindful indulgers.

The four **Disruption Principles** call for artistry, vibrancy, intensity and modernity.

From here, the **strategic platform** became **DIVE IN**.

‘Dive In’ captured everything that was true of the audience, Masterpieces *and* the Masterbrand, and importantly, broke category conventions.

Dive In:

- Is an active choice, not a ‘mindless munch’
- Captures the intensity and vibrancy of Godiva
- Focuses on the feeling, not just taste
- Gives an open invitation to enjoy luxury; modern inclusivity not exclusive old-luxury.

CREATIVE IDEA

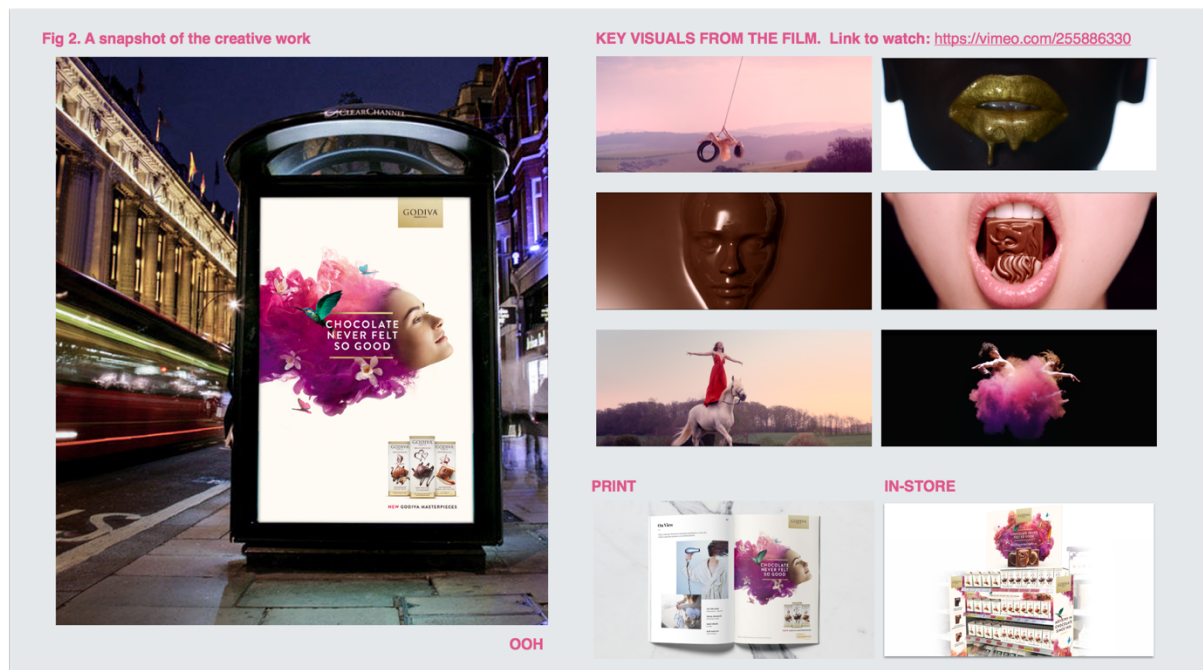
This platform was brought to life through a visceral communications idea, which also became the end-line: **CHOCOLATE NEVER FELT SO GOOD**

Like Masterpieces, this campaign was more than taste.

The central idea was to make you feel the intensity of Godiva.

⁴ Flamingo Research 2016

Felt through the depth of texture in the print, the ebbs and flows of the music in the Rankin-directed film, and the full intensity of the in-store activation, this was a brave campaign to launch in the conventional world of chocolate. It evoked and tantalised every sense. Figure 2 shows a snapshot of the creative work.



LAUNCH STRATEGY

Launch partner: The chosen launch partner was Sainsbury's – a brand which shared in the vision to grow the premium chocolate category and not just drive switchers.

Price point: The price point reflected a premium product, purposefully in-line with and not below competitors.

Packaging: Packaging was designed and researched to bring out cues of artistry, modernity, vibrancy and intensity.

Media targeting: Despite a modest media budget of £600k, a targeted campaign across the whole customer journey was created. This built awareness and consideration pre-shop, drove purchase in store, and built loyalty post-purchase. Figure 3 shows the customer journey and Figure 4, the media laydown.

Fig 3. The multi-touchpoint consumer journey

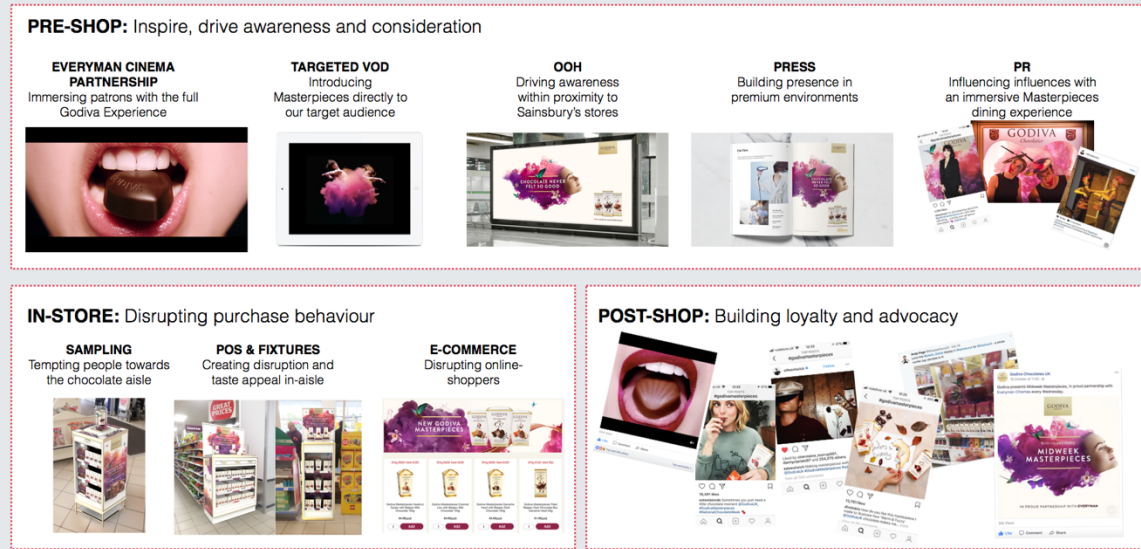
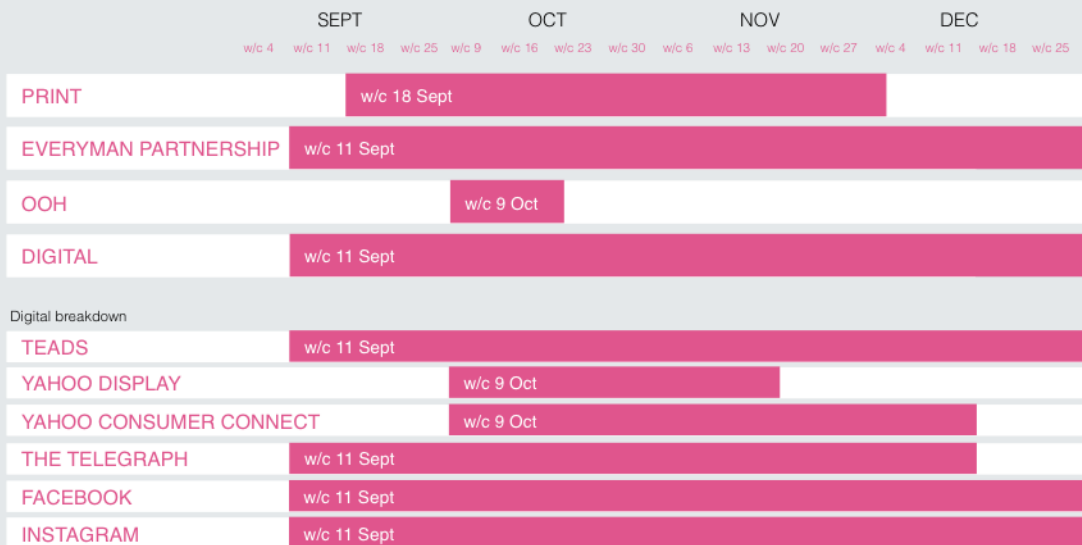


Fig 4. The media laydown



RESULTS

This was a marketing strategy that didn't just grow Godiva, it grew the whole premium chocolate category for Sainsbury's. People weren't switching from competitors to Godiva, they were entering the category anew.

Awareness and Perceptions

Following the launch, even with a modest media budget, brand awareness increased a healthy 9%, reaching **27%**. This beat the target of 25%.

Importantly, this wider, more mainstream awareness hadn't been to the detriment of the brand's luxury credentials. The target had been to maintain luxury perceptions, but these was in fact bettered. Perceptions of Godiva having 'high quality products' saw a positive increase of 3%.

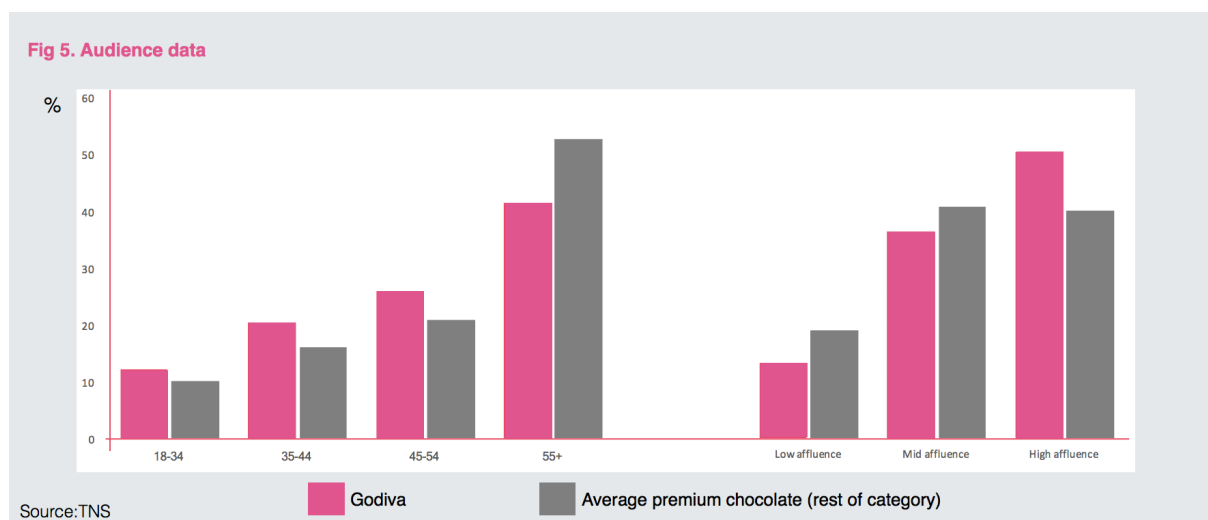
Sales and Growth

Godiva had set themselves a 4-month target of £1.5m. They didn't just hit it, they doubled it, achieving a total of £3.1m sales.

Starting from nothing, this gave them a 10% market share of premium chocolate in Sainsbury's. This was a more-than-solid start to the overall business vision of achieving 10% share of all premium chocolate by 2020.

Importantly Godiva shoppers differed to that of competitors

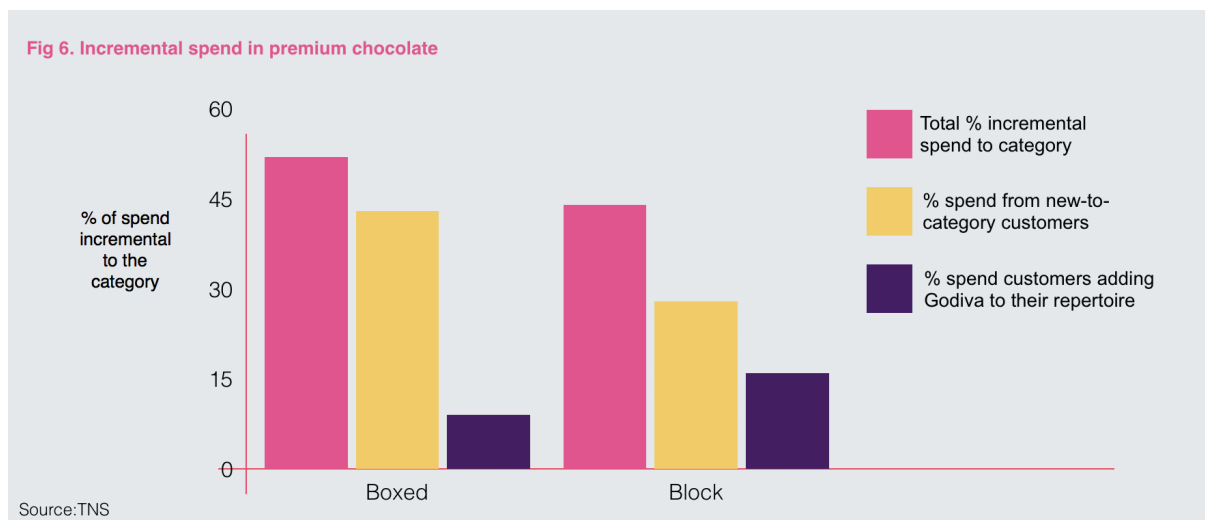
Analysis of audience data showed that Masterpieces successfully attracted a different audience to that of Lindt, Ferrero and Thornton's. This audience was younger and more affluent (Figure 5).



This audience was new to premium chocolate, driving impressive growth in the category

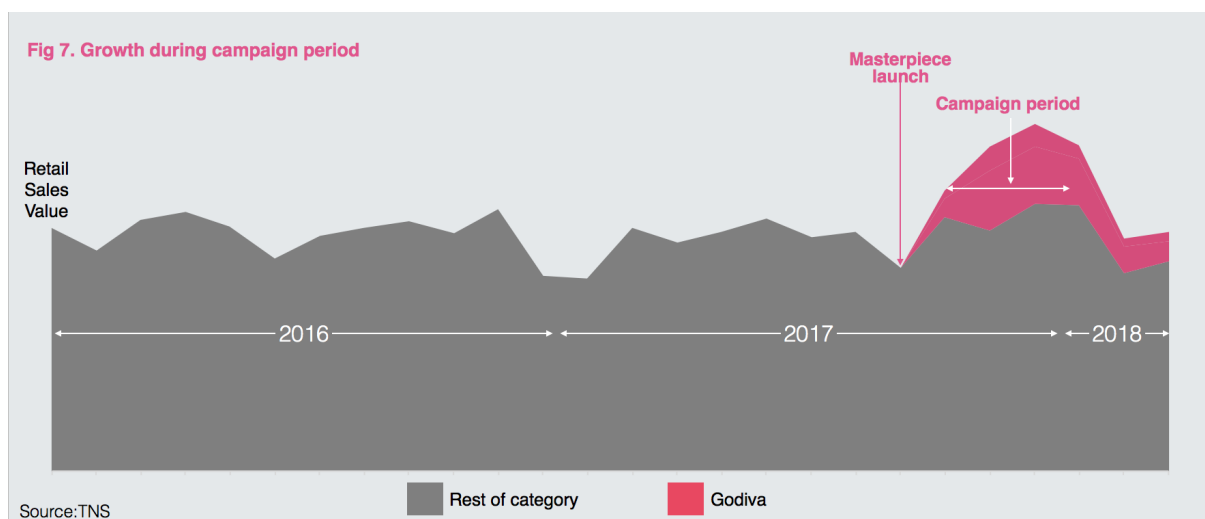
Amongst boxed chocolate, **43%** of people buying Godiva were completely new-to-category shoppers, i.e. they had not bought *any* premium chocolate in the 26 weeks prior to Godiva’s launch. A further 9% added Godiva to their repertoire, i.e. they were buying it alongside their existing favourite premium chocolate. In total, this created **52%** incremental growth (Figure 6).

In block chocolate, the same pattern was seen, with 28% new to category and 16% adding Godiva to their repertoire, delivering **44%** incremental customers.



Overall these sales drove 97% of never-before-seen incremental category growth, spiking during the campaign period

This was not a seasonal trend. Long-term growth data shows that while competitors sales remained steady, sales of Godiva brought additional growth. These sales reached a peak during the campaign period (Figure 7).

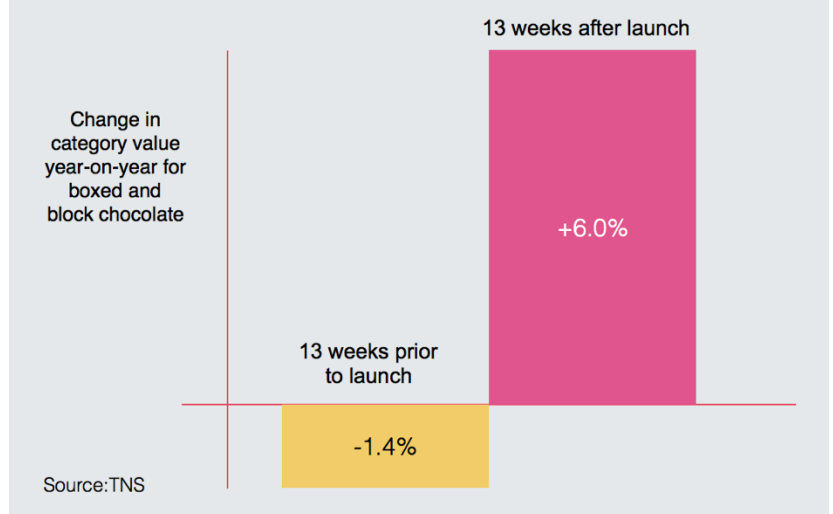


Year-on-year data shows the immediate impact Godiva made

Comparing the category value pre- and post-campaign further highlights Godiva's impact on category growth, delivering a 6% increase in value in the 13 weeks after launch (Figure 8).

Importantly too, this wasn't a one off-purchase. **23%** people who bought a Godiva product returned to buy more.

Fig 8. Year-on-year change pre and post launch



This perfect combination of a new audience, growth and repurchase data together cemented the longevity of Godiva. It gave Sainsbury's the confidence to give Godiva more shelf space for more product lines, and secured new partnerships with other grocers.

This was a truly successful democratisation of luxury.

1939 words