



**2014  
Marketing  
Society Awards**

**Marketing  
Communications**

**John Lewis**



## Executive Summary

### **John Lewis – The Bear & The Hare**

This paper tells the story of the 2013 John Lewis Christmas Campaign. It was the most ambitious marketing communications undertaken by the retailer to date.

John Lewis the home of ‘thoughtful gifting’, where shoppers can find the gifts that demonstrate just that little bit more thought than they could elsewhere.

The creative platform for the 2013 marketing campaign leveraged this truth - Give someone a Christmas they’ll never forget.

And the creative idea focused on the joy of experiencing Christmas for the first time, seen through the eyes of someone who had always missed out... a hibernating bear.

Brought to life on TV, in-store, online, in CSR and through a wealth of media, the Bear and Hare became the most high profile campaign of 2013 - 12 million people have watched the TV ad on YouTube, it made the front page of Private Eye and put a single at the top of the official chart for three weeks. And it generated record sales and ROI levels.

In January 2014 Campaign magazine wrote:

*'John Lewis had the most high-profile campaign of Christmas 2013. In fact, it was probably one of the most high-profile campaigns of all time.'*

This is the story of that campaign, and the impact it had on the brand, the business and the nation's hearts.

Christmas has become the time of year when many brands bring out their most brilliant marketing communications activities. This isn't just the retailers but also alcoholic drinks, FMCG icons like Coca Cola, and modern technology superpowers like Apple.

To compete and thrive in this commercially important and creatively competitive six weeks takes something special. And in 2013 John Lewis ran its most special marketing campaign to date.

## John Lewis

John Lewis had the most high-profile advertising campaign of Christmas 2013. In fact, it was probably one of the most high-profile campaigns of all time. The success of the campaign is that buys a brand that he can also appear persuasive

### 1. 'Remarkable Marketing'

The sound of three non-co... top of the sing... alarm clocks ro... week after the ad... More importantly, overall sales increased 6.9 per cent in the five weeks leading to 28 December, while online takings were up 22.6 per cent compared with the same period in 2012.

The year-on-year improvement in sales was not as good as it was in 2012 (13 per cent), but the brand is building on its own success.

Andy Street, the managing director of John Lewis, was sufficiently impressed with Adam & Eve/ DDB's campaign to mention it in a statement that accompanied the financial results, describing how many people "fell in love" with the brand's TV ad. "The bear and the hare" has been viewed more than 11.5 million times on YouTube.

# It will take a truly remarkable brand message to cut through in 2014

by Jon Goldstone, 05.02.2014

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As a marketer, it is tempting to be constantly chasing the next new thing, but 2013 reaffirmed my fundamental belief that the secret of great marketing is to communicate remarkable messages that will convince more people to buy your brand.

When I say remarkable, I mean it in the truest sense of the word: something that you are bothered enough about to physically remark upon.

Seth Godin introduced the concept of a "purple cow" 10 years ago. He tells the story of driving for hours past fields of ordinary cows without noticing a single one, but when he passes a field containing a single purple cow it causes him to turn his head and



Also In January 2014 Marketing Magazine ran a thinkpiece by Jon Goldstone, the ex-Marketing lead of Hovis and now at Unilever. He wrote...

*“Consumers see more advertising messages in a day than ever before; it’s rare that they see one that is interesting enough for them to comment upon, but, when they do, they have the opportunity to tell a lot of people about it very quickly through their social network. The magic is to make sure that not only is your message remarkable, but also that it is likely to convince more people to buy your brand.*


*The best example of all in recent times has to be the most recent John Lewis Christmas campaign. A remarkable piece of film, it is wonderfully consistent with what the brand stands for, masterfully amplified across multiple channels, and has driven what seems like industry-leading levels of growth.”*

**Christmas accounts for around 20% of overall sales and 40% of annual profits at John Lewis. And a successful Christmas sets the business up well for the coming year, giving it great momentum and confidence.**

**In the past John Lewis has performed well at Christmas. Iconic advertising campaigns – The Long Wait, The Snowman’s Journey – have helped deliver market leading commercial performances. But in 2013 the ambition was bigger.**

**John Lewis is at the forefront of omnichannel retailing, embracing stores, digital mobile and the hybrid of them ‘click and collect’. The Christmas campaign activated all these opportunities to interact with different audiences.**

**The objective was simple - to create the most integrated marketing campaign ever for John Lewis, and in fact for any retailer.**



**2. the most important 6 weeks of the year**

An illustration featuring a grey rabbit with long ears and a white chest, sitting on the head of a brown bear. The bear has a large blue nose and is looking forward. In the foreground, there is a white alarm clock with a small bear illustration on its face. The background is a soft, hazy landscape with a light sky.

**3. a  
universal  
story**

John Lewis has a broader product assortment than any other general merchandiser. This means that no matter who you are buying for you will be able to find the perfect gift at John Lewis.

That makes John Lewis the home of ‘thoughtful gifting’ at Christmas time, where shoppers can find the gifts that demonstrate just that little bit more thought than they could elsewhere.

The creative platform for the 2013 marketing campaign leveraged this truth - Give someone a Christmas they’ll never forget.

And the creative idea focused on the joy of experiencing Christmas for the first time, seen through the eyes of someone who had always missed out...

... a hibernating bear.



## **The Bear & The Hare**

Christmas marketing is often about glitz, glamour, celebrities, sparkle and clichés. This is especially true in the retail sector.

John Lewis is determined to stand apart, taking a calmer and quieter approach to its marketing, preferring to touch its customers hearts with more emotive ideas.

And in 2013 that idea was 'The Bear & The Hare', a woodland tale of friendship between two animated characters.

The Bear always missed the fun and joy of Christmas because he hibernated through winter. But this year his friend was determined to find a gift that would help him be part of the festivities, the gift of Christmas itself.



## The TV campaign

The TV campaign was created using a unique animation technique that blended 3D sets with 2D character drawings by Disney legend Aaron Blaise, the director of *Brother Bear*, who had also worked on *The Lion King* and *Pocahontas* among other classics.

The result was the painstaking creation of two minutes of beautifully crafted animation.

But that was just the start of the marketing campaign...



## The campaign lived in store

The Bear & The Hare and the campaign theme lived on every carrier bag, while the characters themselves came to life in store, with an interactive Bear's Cave which provided an opportunity for children to hear the narrated version of The Bear & The Hare and play interactive Bear & Hare games.

It also included a Brighton pier-inspired woodland setting where children or adults could have their photo taken with the woodland creatures.

## ...and in the shop windows

Each branch featured a bespoke Bear & Hare window which gave directions to the Bear Cave.





## A campaign with its own range of merchandising

A significant range of merchandise was sourced and sold in store and online, themed around the campaign. This is the first time John Lewis has created such a range to activate a marketing campaign.

The range included alarm clocks, soft toys, hardback story books, pyjamas, and Bear & Hare onesies in all sizes.

The collection had a 97% sell through rate and the majority of merchandise was sold out within 10 days of the campaign launching. Many of the products have become collector's items, selling on eBay for hundreds of pounds.



## Online

A bespoke app was created – the story of the two friends was narrated by Lauren Laverne, and games and learning activities build throughout it. Over 300,000 downloads followed and it topped the Apple leisure app chart.

Additionally, an online Christmas card maker was developed that let customers blend themselves with the woodland creatures, to create a unique card for friends and family. Over 12,000 Christmas cards were created.





## Social media

Bespoke Twitter @handles were created for the campaign's main characters, delivering 168m impressions of #bearandhare and #sleepingbear in opening weekend from 26k tweets.

Through Twitter and social listening we rewarded members of the public who invoked the spirit as a 'real life hare' and gave people who had clearly gone the extra mile the gift of a framed limited edition print from the animation.

The Shazam music recognition app was taken over to reach all the people searching for the music from the campaign. It became the most 'Shazam'd' ad of 2013.

## REWORKED COMPETITION WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT



And a major competition – Reworked - ran on YouTube inviting people to record their own version of the song on the advert. The winner would have their version played out on TV on the advert on Christmas Day. Matthew Fearon, a 29 year old busker from Liverpool was hand-picked by Keane.

## CSR

Bringing Skills To Life is a free online primary school education programme created by John Lewis.

Download-able Bear & Hare activity cards were made for all three key primary age groups. There was also an online gallery so that schools could upload their pupils' work.

Many classes created their own stories and poems based on the Bear & Hare story. Some even went on to create their own animated versions of the ad.

Over 3000 teachers visiting the section of the Bringing Skills to Life website and over 1000 downloads of the activity cards.



**John Lewis**

### How Hare & Bear became friends

Age: 5-7

Use word skills and imagination to explore friendships.

**What**  
Using the story of The Bear & The Hare, this activity will explore the characters and their friendship. Sharing ideas is a great way to develop oral and auditory skills.

**Where**  
At school or home.

**Activity Ideas**  
1. Start by sharing some games together. Try the ideas on the Just Imagine and Time for a Game activity cards.

2. Read The Bear who had never seen Christmas and talk about Bear and Hare's friendship. Why are the two animals friends? How do we know they are friends? Why did Hare want to be friends to begin with? How did Bear feel when he woke up and found his present? How do you think he will thank Hare?

3. Can you make up a bath-time together for the two animals? What games do Bear and Hare play in the spring or summer?

**You will need**  
The Bear & The Hare, The Bear who had never seen Christmas, a book and interactive games, Just Imagine and Time for a Game, Storyboard activity cards, and Marvellous Puffins Cook & Share recipe card - all available at [johnlewis.com/childrens](http://johnlewis.com/childrens).  
Pencil, paper, recipe books, coloured pens or markers, stamp, paint and glue.

How did they meet and why do they be each other?

4. Can you act out one of the stories you've just made up? Who will play Bear and who will play Hare?

5. Talk about what makes a good friendship and write a recipe for a good friend together. Decide on the ingredients using words like dash, pinch, and sprinkle and write a method using words like mix, add, stir. Ideas might include: add a dash of kindness, a generous amount of patience and ingredients in lots of fun and sunshine. You could look at some recipe books for inspiration or look at the Marvellous Puffins recipe card.

Activity card





**5. a  
radical  
media  
strategy**

John Lewis

John Le  
699,874 Likes

Retail and Consumer Merchandise  
Welcome to the official John Lewis Facebook page  
We'll keep you updated on what we're up to and  
expert Partners are never far away if you have a  
[About](#) - [Suggest an Edit](#)

Media was planned to activate this 'new world' strategy around three phases:

- 1. Tease:**  
harnessing the public's anticipation of the forthcoming ad.
- 2. Launch:**  
unveiling the ad
- 3. Engage:**  
adding depth to the story and inviting participation

In short, while the Christmas campaigns of old had positioned TV as the centrepiece of the plan, this year the TV ad would only be the tip of the iceberg.

## Stage One - Tease

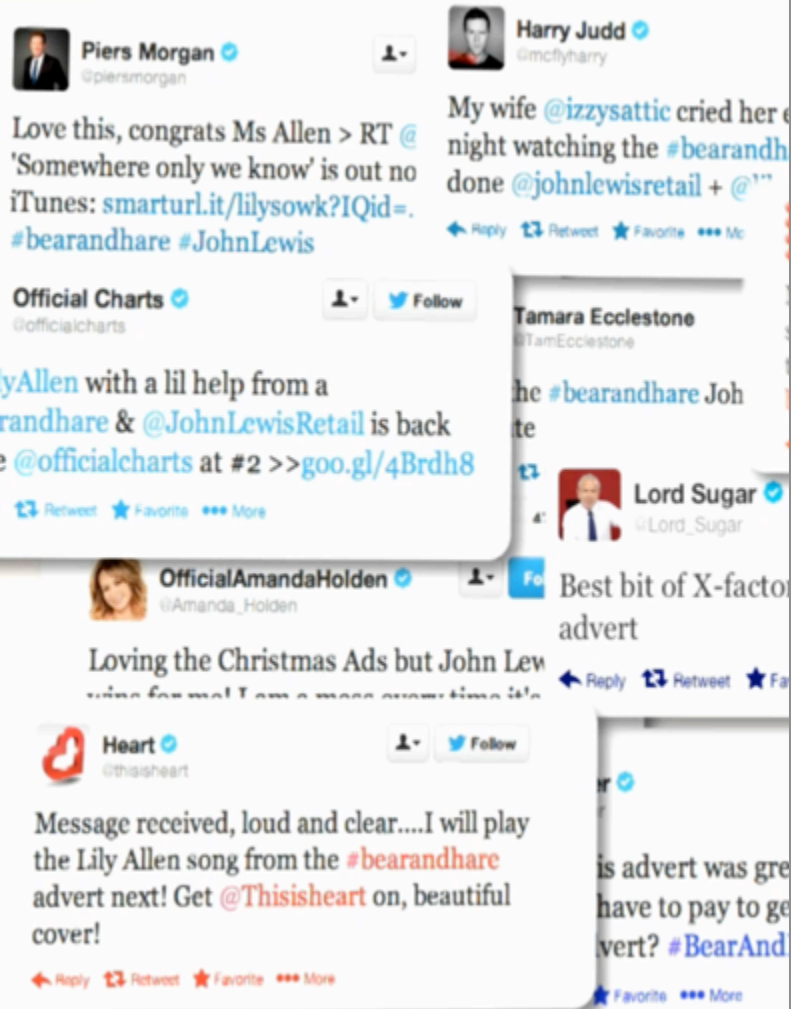
Working with ITV, we ran 10” teasers with a mysterious hashtag #sleepingbear. The teaser ‘ads’ also carried a call to action to tune in that Saturday’s X Factor where all would be revealed.

The teasers were purposely de-branded and carried the station’s logo to give the impression that ITV was launching something big in the show. This created a sense of intrigue – what was this #sleepingbear? 4,000 tweets produced 8 million impressions of the unbranded campaign hashtag, with twitter opinion split between this being something to do with either John Lewis or Coke.

At the same time a special outdoor Installation was unveiled outside ITV’s studios on London’s Southbank – the world’s first ever tree projection.

Again unbranded, it encouraged people to tune in to the X Factor launch spot and was busily tweeted about too.





## Stage Two - Launch

The ad was launched online first to allow customers and followers of John Lewis the chance see it before it was broadcast nationally on TV. This helped to generate further buzz with 1.5 million people viewing it online before a single spot had aired on TV.

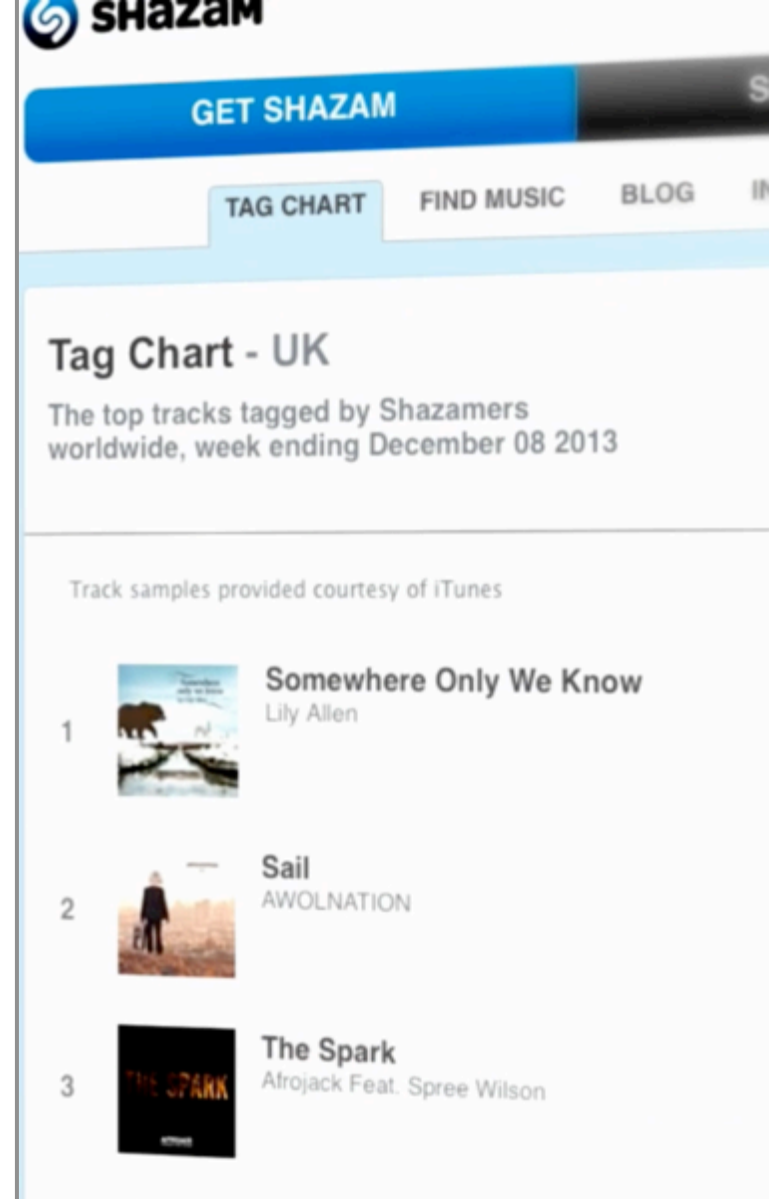
The closest TV advertising equivalent to the Super Bowl in the UK is the X Factor on the second Saturday in November. It is this particular show that is used by dozens of brands to launch their fight for the most loved Christmas TV ad. John Lewis had the first ever takeover of a commercial break in the X Factor. This was an exclusive for John Lewis that required the agreement of Simon Cowell's production company – Syco.



## Stage Three - Engage

With the ad launched, the focus switched to extending the story. A lot of this engagement has been discussed already but other highlights include...

- 100% SoV of Lilly's cover version in the Shazam music recognition app, so that when people 'Shazam'd' the ad track they would be prompted to download the e-book as well.
- Ads in Apple and Android apps were run to further promote the free e-book.
- Cinema goers were treated to the full length 2 min ad (which was only broadcast once on TV in the launch premiere break).
- Skippable ads were rolled out across VOD and gave viewers the option to watch the full length ad rather than pushing it on them and interrupting their viewing behaviour.



SHAZAM




GET SHAZAM

TAG CHART FIND MUSIC BLOG

### Tag Chart - UK

The top tracks tagged by Shazamers worldwide, week ending December 08 2013

Track samples provided courtesy of iTunes

1		<b>Somewhere Only We Know</b> Lily Allen
2		<b>Sail</b> AWOLNATION
3		<b>The Spark</b> Afrojack Feat. Spree Wilson



## 6. the Results

## The social impact

Undoubtedly this was the biggest online response to a marketing campaign in 2013 and possibly one of the most prolific ever.

The ad trended globally on twitter within two hours of airing, and it was the most shared video in the world in November.

Across the Christmas period the TV advert received 12.2 million YouTube views. Compared with the other big Christmas campaigns this is a staggeringly high viewership, and is actually 50% more people than tuned into the BBC's top-rated programme on Christmas day (Doctor Who - which averaged an 8.3 million audience).

	YouTube views
M&S	969,342
Debenhams	403,000
Sainburys	1,179,000
Tesco	786,000
Morrisons	358,125
Debenhams	105,047
Total competitors	3,800,514
John Lewis	12,200,000
John Lewis 'Making Of'	251,899

But it wasn't just YouTube that saw significant activity around the campaign...

- In the X Factor launch spot there were **21%** more tweets than X Factor when the ad broke on ITV.
- **4,000** tweets produced 8 million impressions of the unbranded 'sleepingbear' hashtag.
- **500** entries were received for the YouTube soundtrack cover competition.
- **12,000** Bear and Hare themed online Christmas Cards were sent by customers to friends and family.
- **300,000** Bear and Hare story apps were downloaded onto smartphones and tablets.
- **130,000** Shazams of Lilly's cover version.

The image shows a screenshot of the 'ReWorked' website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Videos', 'Discussion', 'About', and 'ReWorked'. The main header features the 'REWORKED' logo in large white letters on a red background, with 'COMPETITION WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT' in smaller white text to the right. Below the header is a large video player showing a man playing an acoustic guitar. Underneath the video player is a section titled 'FAVOURITE VIDEOS' which contains three video thumbnails. The first thumbnail is titled 'John Lewis Reworked Entry -' and has '2072 views'. The second is 'ReWorked 2013 -- Lily Allen' with '179367 views'. The third is '90 Second W...'. Below this is a section titled 'LATEST ENTRIES' with three more video thumbnails partially visible.

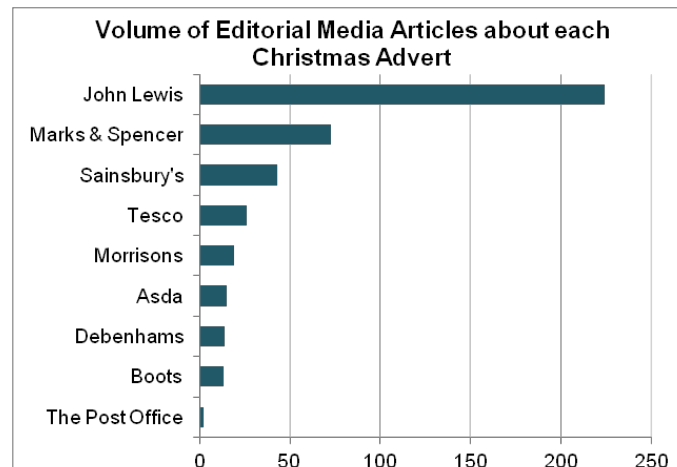


## The cultural impact

The cultural impact of the campaign was marked.

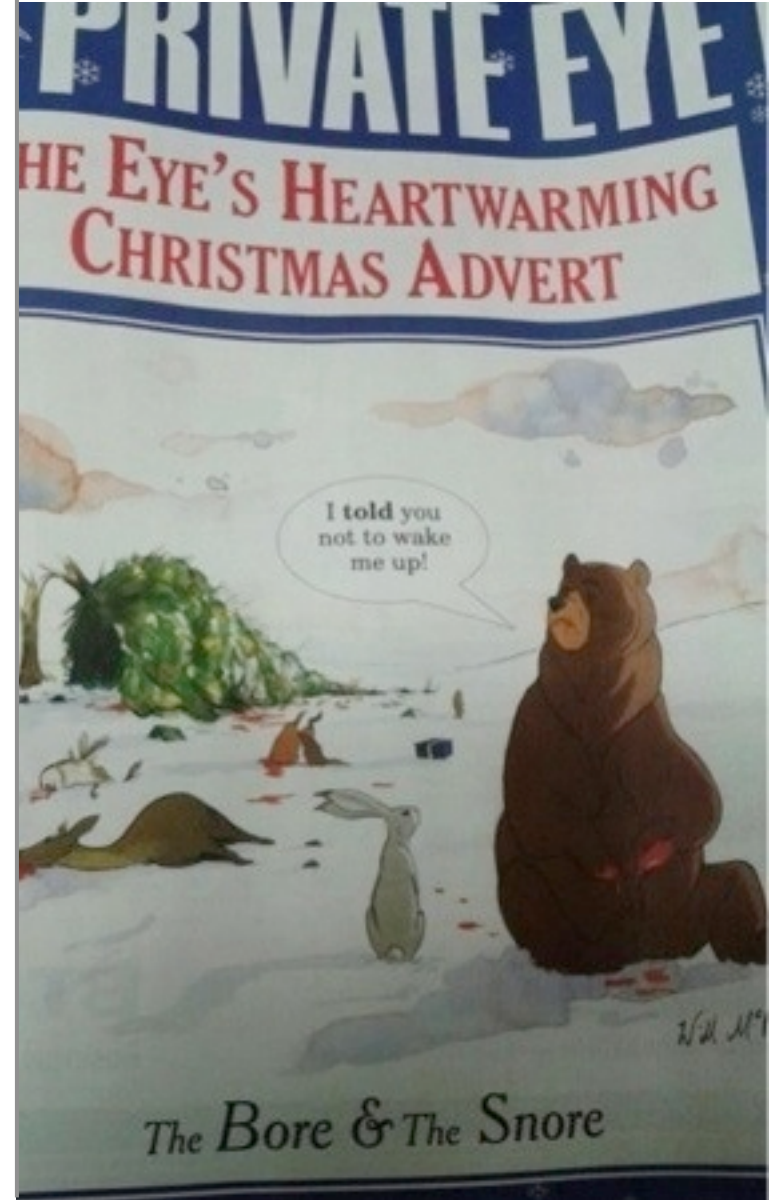
The Lily Allen soundtrack went to number one for three weeks on the official UK charts, selling 20,311 units, equating to a donation of £18,076.79 to Save the Children.

Every national newspaper covered the campaign, with over 200 articles in total, far eclipsing the competition:



But even those publications that stand proudly against consumer campaigns could not ignore The Bear & The Hare, with the campaign making the front cover of Private Eye.

It was also the subject of conversation on shows as varied as Graham Norton, Charlie Brooker's 2013 Wipe and Have I Got News For You.



**'Hare and Bear effect': £101m record takings at John Lewis thanks to Christmas advert**



Touching tale: in the advert, a bear's friends help him to enjoy his Christmas

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Published: 22 November 2013  
 Updated: 10:57, 22 November 2013  
**Heathrow hires high-wire team to change tens of thousands of 'out of reach' light bulbs**

JONATHAN PRYDE, CONSUMER BUSINESS EDITOR

John Lewis's extraordinary "hare and bear" advert has sent sales

**The commercial impact**

John Lewis was the clear winner across the key Christmas retail period in 2013.

Sales were up 6.9% in the five weeks to 28<sup>th</sup> December. This compares very favourably with key competitors and other retailer's Christmas performances...

John Lewis	<b>+ 6.9%</b>
Waitrose	<b>+ 3.1%</b>
Sainsbury's	<b>+ 0.2%</b>
M&S	<b>- 2.1%</b>
Tesco	<b>- 2.4%</b>
Morrisons	<b>- 5.6%</b>

As well as outperforming its rivals and other big retailers over the Christmas period John Lewis also far outdid the overall retail average like-for-like performance, as measured by the British Retail Consortium:

John Lewis	<b>6.9%</b>
The BRC average	<b>0.4%</b>

## Marketing ROI

John Lewis work with econometricians at Marketshare They estimate that the campaign drove £128.4m in incremental revenue.

This represents a Revenue ROI of **£25.68**, and a Profit ROI of **£8.91** - a 10% uplift compared to the profit ROI for 2012 (£8.10).

## John Lewis kicks off 150th year with record Christmas sales

by Alex Brownsell, 02.01.2014

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Andy Street: John Lewis managing director says retailer aims to expand internationally

**John Lewis has posted record sales figures for Christmas, up 6.9% year on year, as the retailer gears up to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2014.**

The brand revealed like-for-like sales in the five weeks to 28 December reached £734m, up nearly 7% on the same period in 2012, driven by rapid growth in online sales.



## **7. The biggest marketing event of Christmas**

This paper has set out to demonstrate how John Lewis has built upon a very successful advertising formula, to create its most ambitious, differentiated and successful marketing communications ever.

This was a campaign that created its own merchandising range that sold out in days; that shot a single to the top of the Christmas charts for three weeks; that brought social media and broadcast media together to allow a customer to sing on the ad on Christmas day; and that was such an event that the nation's favourite TV show was interrupted, exclusively for its launch.

The sales results speak volumes, as John Lewis' Christmas performance eclipsed all other retailers, and the return on investment hit an all time high for a John Lewis marketing campaign at almost £9 profit generated for every £1 spent.

It was a simple story that engaged the whole country with over 12 million views on YouTube signifying just how popular it was.

Christmas is a time of giving and this campaign gave joy to millions and gave healthily to the commercial success of the nation's best loved retailer.