

# MARKETING EXCELLENCE 2

## Magners

Refreshing the entire  
cider category



MARKETING  
SOCIETY

AWARDS FOR  
**EXCELLENCE**

in association with  
**Marketing**

# About The Marketing Society



## **INSPIRING BOLDER MARKETING LEADERSHIP**

The Marketing Society is a not-for-profit organisation owned by its members, with over 2500 senior marketers. Over the past 50 years it has emerged as one of the most influential drivers of marketing in the UK business community.

The Society challenges its members to think differently and to be bolder marketing leaders by supporting the development of leading-edge thinking, and promoting the evidence of effective marketing. The Society does this through the Marketing Society Awards for Excellence; its publications Market Leader, Our Week and rich online Knowledge Zone; a national programme of world-class events; innovative professional development, such as the annual Marketing Leaders Programme; and extensive on-and-offline networking opportunities.

[www.marketing-society.org.uk](http://www.marketing-society.org.uk)

# Foreword

By Roisin Donnelly,  
President of The Marketing Society

## What is marketing excellence?



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Marketing excellence can drive breakthrough business results for the short and long term. Marketing excellence requires great strategic thinking, great creative thinking and perfect execution.

But how do we assess *marketing* excellence? First we choose brilliant industry judges who are all experienced and successful practitioners of excellence and we ask them to pick out the cases which they see as remarkable. We ask them to look for two key qualities from our winners: creativity and effectiveness.

But marketing continuously changes and evolves, as consumers become more sophisticated and demanding and the media for communicating with them ever more diverse. So the standards for marketing excellence change and in turn become more demanding.

We believe that The Marketing Society Awards for Excellence in association with *Marketing* set the standard of marketing excellence in the UK. They have established this reputation over a period of

more than 25 years, and they have always been based on the principle of searching out the best examples of different marketing techniques in action, that showcase great strategic thinking, great creativity and perfect execution.

In order to be a winner of one of the Society's Awards, marketers have to demonstrate that what they have done is outstanding in comparison with marketing in all industries not just their own particular sector.

If a marketing story has been good enough to impress our judges, then all marketers can learn from it – however senior they have become. The collection of case histories brought together in this book is the best of the best from the past four years of our Awards, and I am confident that it truly demonstrates *marketing excellence*. I have been truly inspired by these case studies and I hope you will be too.

# Magners

## Refreshing the entire cider category

### Snapshot

Magners defied industry analysts' negative views of the potential of the cider market with the successful launch of its new cider brand in the UK, which revitalised a moribund category.

### Key insights

- The languishing cider market received an injection of new energy with the arrival of the Magners brand at a time when the industry had written the market off.
- The brand's strong point of differentiation of pouring it over ice brought a sense of freshness to the category, appealing to even the most jaded consumers.
- A multi-platform campaign, including advertising, outdoor, press and sponsorship made the whole much bigger than the sum of its parts.

### Summary

Magners is the brand owned by Irish drinks company C&C Group. When the company began to research the possibility of launching its Irish cider into London in 2005, industry specialists warned the company that cider was a declining market which held little or no potential. Within 18 months of the launch Magners was not only the leading bottled alcohol

brand in London, but it became a trendy beverage among young people.

What propelled Magners into such an elevated position in the UK was the integrated marketing programme for Magners Irish Cider, while the premium pricing strategy (+20% vs premium beer) supported the brand positioning. Its unique selling point was its service — a pint of Magners from the bottle was to be poured over ice — which established a point of differentiation in the cider market, offering consumers added value from both a premium drinking experience and prolonged enjoyment of the beverage.

The importance of sampling and the extensive programme undertaken accelerated trial and was a sign of confidence in the product, helping ensure faster consumer connection. This translated into a 332% increase in volume sales in just one year. This very success soon attracted aggressive competition, particularly from Bulmer's, which, ironically, copied the now-textbook marketing strategy outlined in this case study.



## Making the initial foray

When C&C decided to launch its Magners brand into the competitive London market in 2005, it was keen to apply the learnings of its successful launch in Scotland. It had carried out extensive research in early 2002, launching in Scotland as a whole in 2004 with the Magners 'Seasons' advertising campaign (Figure 1). By 2005 it was ready to attack the hardest market of all, London.

There were a number of ambitious marketing objectives for London:

- Build brand awareness and generate sales.
- Become the number one bottled alcoholic brand within four years.
- Make each season as relevant as the next for a product which had traditionally been a summer-only drink.
- Position the brand as a premium product in the long alcoholic drinks market (LAD).

Research told the company a number of things:

- First, that the London market was likely to prove challenging but not insurmountably so.
- Secondly, that distance and its effect on time and transport costs shaped how Londoners drank.
- Finally, consumers were faced with so much choice that they had learned to edit their way quickly through the choices confronting them.

Analysis of the extensive consumer research conducted by RG Research led Magners to develop the following hypothesis to underpin its consumer insight: irrespective of economic or cultural differences, people would adopt and crave an ideology that opposed the routine and habitual. This was followed by what the company termed the 'connection' moment: 'The orchard is more than just a place; it's a sanctuary whose consistency is refreshing'.



Figure 1. 'Seasons' ad campaign



Figure 2. 'Seasons' ad campaign

### Finding the right balance

The research led the company to conclude that a brand which placed such a premium on 'time' and 'heritage' was exactly the antidote that these 'over-choiced' consumers needed. The 'Seasons' campaign was designed to reinforce the importance of time within another world — the orchard. It could serve to propel these consumers out of the monotony of being rushed and into an aspirational zone of 'lazing on a sunny afternoon' or 'enjoying the magic of a little ice around winter' (Figure 2,3 and 4).

Even though research had shown that the London audience was possibly the most cynical and hesitant in the world, due to the over-exposure of brands and messages on a continual basis, Magners felt that it would be more difficult to be cynical about something that was rooted in a product truth. Authenticity was a rarity in this market.

Because the London media marketplace in London was somewhat of a circus, it warranted a radical, innovative and completely integrated strategy to achieve maximum impact, with the 'Seasons' TV campaign acting as the lead media. This TV activity would communicate both the emotional and functional benefits of the Magners brand to the key target market.

The media brief was to create 'shock and awe' while remaining true to Magners and the integrity of the 'Seasons' campaign. What that meant, in essence, was bringing the Irish orchard to the concrete jungle.

The strategy was one of heavy, sustained attack in highly concentrated areas. Prior to launch, Magners had near-zero distribution in London. Its approach was to drop high-impact, highly visible advertising into new areas to build distribution quickly in pubs and bars. Put simply, in London, 'If the punters ask for



Figure 3. 'Seasons' ad campaign

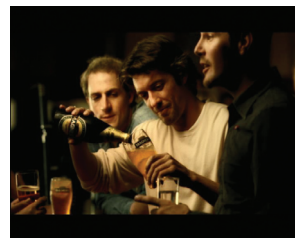
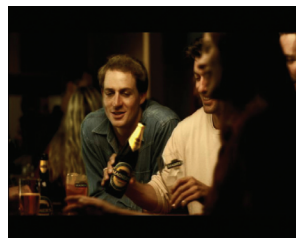


Figure 4. 'Seasons' ad campaign



it the landlord has to get it'. Through the advertising campaign the company wanted to ensure talkability, thereby triggering consumer call for brand. The 'Seasons' TV campaign, due to its immediately arresting visuals and highly evocative music tracks enabled Magners to achieve significant cut-through. However, it was felt that these visuals needed to be built on to bring the strategy to life.



Figure 5. Outdoor advertising



Figure 6. Magazine gatefold

## Going the extra media mile

In order to overcome the negativity that existed in regard to cider and give permission to drink cider and, even more so, over ice — a new innovation in the UK cider market — significant media investment and TV media weights were added to the 'Seasons' advertising campaign. This was supported by continuous mainstream outdoor (Figure 5) radio and 'Seasons' press campaigns.

For example, in collaboration with the company's media arm, MPG, creative outdoor executions were developed to leverage the brand's 'natural apple' proposition by turning Waterloo Tube station into a virtual orchard by buying every poster site on the concourse. This original initiative not only created a visual feast but took an artificial man-made structure and naturalised it, thus bringing to life the Magners brand values of 'craft, tradition, naturalness, time and heritage'.

In addition, three-page seasonal pull-out gatefolds were placed in style magazines such as *FHM* and *Arena* to bring the orchard into an unexpected environment and arrest the audience's attention (Figure 6).

This was about bringing the consumer insight to life by giving this supposedly cynical audience, who were tied into their habitual choices, a refreshing snippet of a landscape that was far more engaging and which would motivate them even when they stood waiting for the train to take them to their 9-to-5 jobs. The aim was to create an image that would not be forgotten easily, but stay with them for the day.

To dramatise even further the contrast of the natural Magners world with that of the synthetic urban environment, the company devised a 'media first'

with a 96-sheet poster which dispersed real apple blossoms. These showered down on passing human traffic, resulting once again in positive talk about Magners Irish cider (Figure 7).

Another media first took place at Heathrow airport, with the entire length and breath of the well-known Heathrow tunnel covered with authentic visuals of the Clonmel orchard, giving the appearance that you were, in fact, in the orchard itself (Figure 8).

### A natural fit for sponsorship

Sponsorship became another essential way to deepen consumer relationships.

- Building on the success of previous sports sponsorships, Magners decided that London Wasps was the perfect fit for the brand. The 'natural' link with wasps and blossoms were inherently obvious and the very fact that the brand would team up with an emerging rugby side made the decision that bit more inspired. (The sponsorship ended after the end of the four-year contract in 2009).

- Further development of this equity association was the sponsorship of the Magners League, helping to extend the brand into Wales and lending even more weight, not to mention the increased column inches the coverage generated.
- The sponsorship of the Scottish Golfing Championship also enabled the brand to gain further respectability by seamlessly entering a territory which would normally never have been a mainstay for cider.

### Beating every target

Research conducted prior to the launch of Magners Irish Cider in the UK market and industry trends at the time indicated that without Magners activity the market would have continued to decline. Existing brands in the market had resigned themselves to the fact that the market was failing because consumers had not been presented with any reason to consider cider as a potential beverage.



Figure 7. Poster



Figure 8. Heathrow tunnel

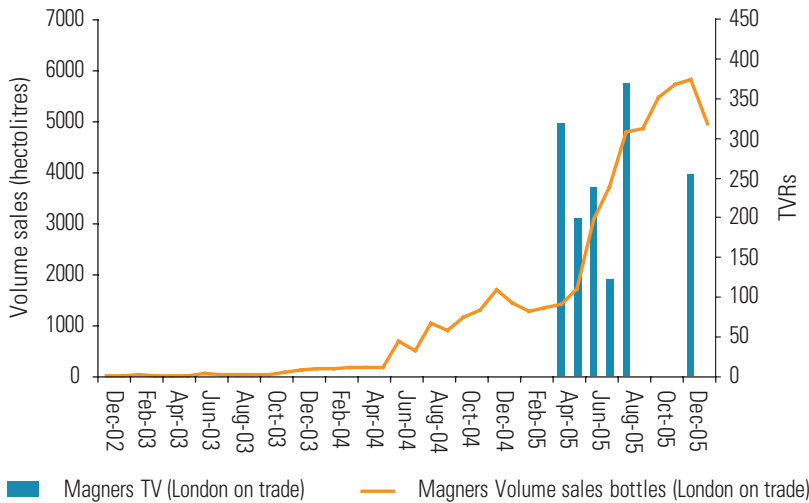


Figure 9. Direct correlation between TV commercials airing and Magners 285% increase in volume sales  
Source: AC Nielsen

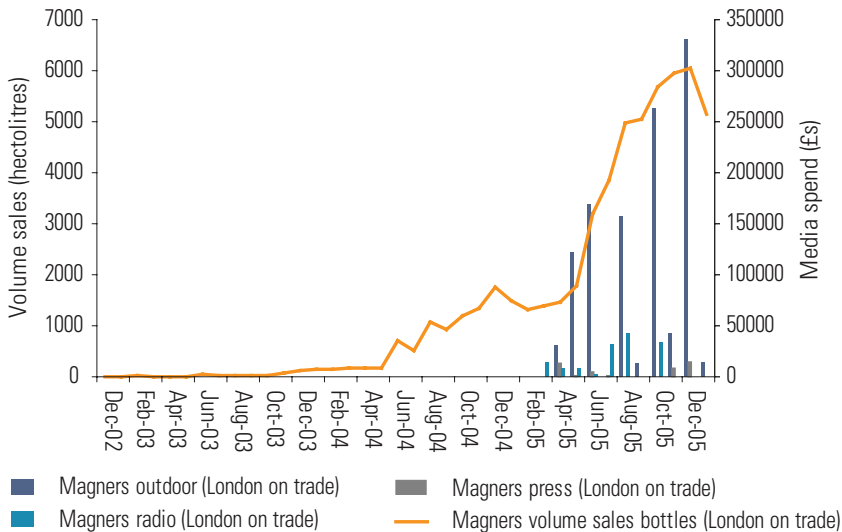


Figure 10. Direct correlation between Magners advertising activity and a 285% increase in their volume sales  
Source: AC Nielsen

C&C estimated that Magners accounted for 75% of the growth in UK cider sales in 2006. Other notable results included:

- It became the no. 1 bottled alcohol brand, outselling bottles of Stella or Budweiser, the previous category leaders in London, after just 12 months — and three years ahead of target.
- There was a direct correlation between the airing of the TV ads in London and the hike in volume sales (Figure 9).
- The same was true for non-TV advertising (Figure 10).

Meanwhile, by September 2006:

- Magners was the no. 1 packaged LAD in the UK, with a 26% share and 30% share of total cider sales.
- Magners was the no. 1 packaged LAD in London with 27% share and 36% share of total cider sales.
- Magners was the no. 1 packaged LAD in Scotland, with 26% share, and accounted for 46% of total cider sales.
- Magners was the no. 1 packaged cider in the UK, with 77% share, rising to 90% of the Scottish packaged cider market.
- Packaged cider was the fastest-growing product and accounted for 37% of total UK cider sales and 51% of cider sales in Scotland.

Finally, Magners' brand success was key to driving the C&C share price from €2.26 at initial stock market quotation to €11.94 by 23rd January 2007, more than four times its original value.



# Sponsors

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We are committed to delivering one distinctive experience for our customers. Wherever they are, we want them each to feel that "no one recognises me like Aviva". Our global consumer research reveals that most of our competitors are particularly bad at recognising people's individual significance. This research also tells us that small human touches can make a huge difference to a customer's experience. Our aim is to make recognition the familiar quality that distinguishes Aviva from our competitors - just as Apple means user-friendliness and FedEx means reliability.

BT operates in over 170 countries and is one of the world's leading communications services companies. BT is a major supplier of networked IT services to government departments and multinational companies. It's the UK's largest communications service provider to consumer and business markets and is made up primarily of four customer-facing lines of business: BT Retail, BT Global Services, Openreach, and BT Wholesale.

BT operates in a thriving, multi-trillion pound industry that spans the whole world. In recent years the global communications market has been focused on convergence, whereby the boundaries between telcos, IT companies, software businesses, hardware manufacturers and broadcasters have become intertwined to create a new communications industry.

BT has evolved from being a supplier of telephony services to become a



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We are working hard every day to build the company around what our customers want from us. That's why Aviva now ranks among the UK's top ten most valuable brands, according to the 2010 Brand Finance Global 500 survey and that success is something we are looking to replicate across the world.



leading provider of innovative communications products, services, solutions and entertainment products. BT's business customers range from multinational, multi-site corporations to SMEs and start-ups.

More than 80 per cent of the FTSE 100 and 40 per cent of Fortune 500 companies rely on BT for networking, applications and system integration. The National Health Service, Procter & Gamble, PepsiCo, BMW, Emirates, Fiat, Microsoft, Philips, and Unilever are just some of the organisations working with BT.

BT has been a driving force behind the success of 'Broadband Britain'. Thanks to the company's investment, nearly every home in Britain now has access to broadband and in September 2009, BT announced plans to more than double the availability of its fastest fibre broadband service.

# MARKETING EXCELLENCE 2

“A treasure trove of examples covering the whole waterfront, from launching new brands to revitalising, sustaining and extending established ones, and from insights to advertising and sustainability. Whatever your business, it should make you proud to be a marketer, shake up your thinking and inspire you to go the extra mile.”

Professor Patrick Barwise, London Business School, Chairman of Which?

“This exciting book demonstrates how great marketing can solve the most difficult problems, through analysis, teamwork and creativity.

It contains 34 fascinating case studies, selected from hundreds of high quality entries to The Marketing Society Awards for Excellence. Those involved had the determination to win, and the courage to think differently. An inspiring read.”

Professor Hugh Davidson, Co-Founder, Oxford Strategic Marketing

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Keith Weed, Chief Marketing and Communication Officer, Unilever

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