



Packaged Goods Silver Winner "One of a Kind Hershey's Kisses™"

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**Hershey's® Kisses® Brand:  
Reviving an Icon through "One of a Kind" Consumer Insights**

**Business Situation**

*Hershey's Kisses* brand has been an American icon for over 100 years. It has near universal brand awareness and one of the top equities among all brands (Harris EquiTrend, 2008, 2009). Beginning in 2006 however, *Hershey's Kisses* brand began to experience erosion with declining sales and share. This was due to a number of factors including:

- Ad spending was low relative to competitive spending
- Recent creative focused on a broad female target
- Advertising did not communicate a compelling emotional benefit

**Marketing Strategy:** Revitalize *Hershey's Kisses* brand by:

- Reinforcing the brand's relevance by understanding the essence of what the brand stands for, both emotionally and functionally
- Communicate this message to consumers in a meaningful way with growth levels of media support
- Grow awareness and frequency of use for the brand

**Research Plan:**

- Deep dive into the *Kisses* chocolate consumption experience
- Understand who is the Strategic Value Consumer Target
- Develop and evaluate compelling new creative for the brand

## Consumer Insights

### Chocolate Strategic Study – Landis S&I

Step one was to understand how the consumers view the Chocolate Category and the *Kisses* brand. Additionally, we identified the consumer targets for each brand (Strategic Value Targets). Key insights were:

- *Kisses* brand was identified as delivering on the need for sharing affection
- The product is a symbol of love and affection – a wonderful way to connect with loved ones, both family and friends - great to share and always appreciated
- The brand has a unique, identifiable shape that is perfect for eating and sharing

### Qualitative Positioning Research – The Cambridge Group

Focus groups with users provided additional insights into narrowing the target and positioning.

- The *Kisses* brand's Strategic Value Target (SVT) was identified. Their primary reason to use *Kisses* chocolates is to celebrate and connect with others. They are highly engaged in chocolate and more likely to be moms with children in the household. Reinforcing *Kisses* chocolates as a symbol of affection was the key to driving their consumption.
- *Kisses* chocolates are seen to be a **“one of a kind” chocolate** that no other chocolate can deliver on. It fits into consumers' lives in multiple ways:
  - Consumers don't just eat *Kisses* chocolates; instead they have a deep emotional connection to the *Kisses* eating experience
  - Functionally, it has a truly “one of a kind” unique shape, taste and texture that combine to deliver a ritualistic and pleasurable experience. It provides a big, rich chocolate taste
  - The foil wrap adds to the uniqueness and is perceived as being similar to unwrapping a gift, and the flag/plum seen as a “ribbon” on the present or gift
  - It is a perfect “gift” for me to savor AND something I am proud to share with others
  - It is a special treat, but great for everyday consumption
  - That has a timeless quality that cuts across all generations

### Young Family Ethnographic Research – The Geppetto Group

The key insight from this ethnography of moms revealed that sharing love and affection via *Kisses* chocolates equals the importance between two people. This is different from historical *Kisses* brand advertising which solely focused on the *Kisses* chocolates and did not include people in the advertising.

### Developing the Campaign

Based on all the research, the relevant consumer insight was that moms are always looking for simple and fun ways to connect with family, and friends, and themselves every day. *Kisses* chocolates are unique in the chocolate category in providing a familiar, iconic, big chocolate taste for her to savor herself or to share and make meaningful connections. *Kisses* chocolates are the connector that make you feel special, and sparks a smile in yourself as well as others.

A TV campaign was developed by Arnold, NY. The spot, called “Factory” focuses on the *Kisses* journey from being made in the *Kisses* factory, to ending up in a candy bowl where a child shares a *Kisses* Milk Chocolate with his mom. The spot focuses equally on the functional attributes of the *Kisses* brand as well as the emotional benefits. The familiar song, “Heigh Ho,” as background music added to the fun nature of the spot and brings a smile.



### **Campaign Results**

The “Factory” spot was tested via Millward Brown and generated outstanding results

- *Kisses* “Factory” was the **highest scoring ad in The Hershey Company’s History**
- “Factory” scored significantly higher than the Company’s average
- The ad had strong communication playback of *Kisses* chocolate taste and being good to eat myself or to share.
- “Factory” was the highest category ad tested (among candy/mint/gum competitive ads tested)

### **Investment**

*Kisses* advertising was supported with a robust media plan including TV and print behind:

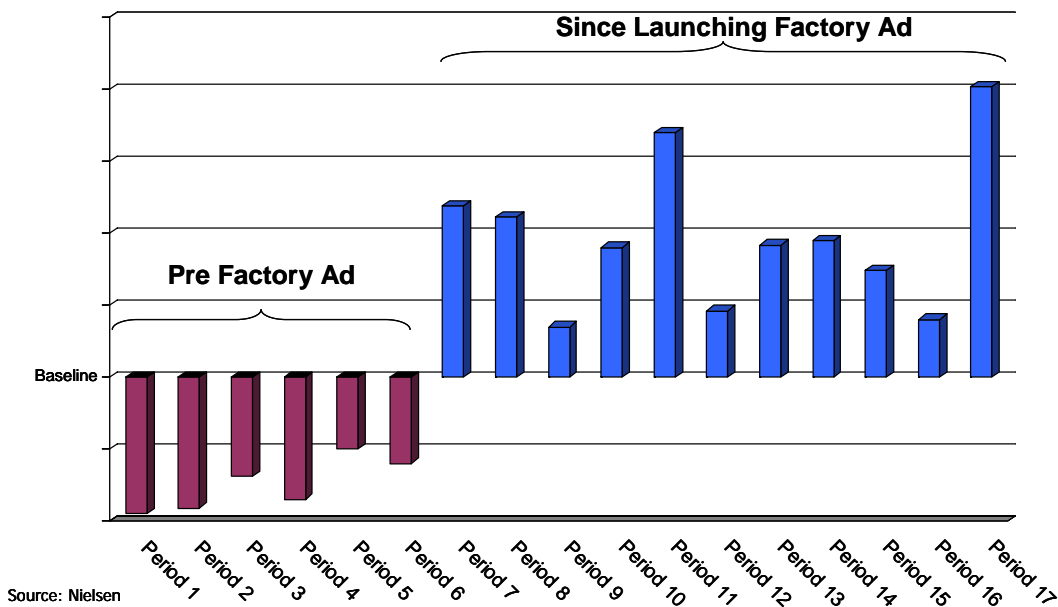
- A continuity plan with TV advertising running throughout the year
- Growth level GRP weights
- Programming targeted to females 25-49 with children







### **Business Results**

The Factory Campaign showed immediate and lasting impact

- **Increased Sales:**
  - Double digit growth since launching the advertising
  - Growth has outpaced the category
  - Considerable increases in velocity on milk chocolate and all core flavors
  - As a result of this work, the *Kisses* brand has regained share vs. competition.

## Hershey's Kisses –Sales Chg vs YAGO



- In addition to great sales results, the *Kisses* brand has also driven significant increases in key Brand Equity Measures (Millward Brown Tracking)
  -  Awareness
  -  Trier Acceptors of the Brand
  -  Past 4 Week Usage
  -  Uniqueness Perception
  -  Being Emotionally Connected to the Brand
  -  Messaging attributes which reinforce the brand positioning
- *Hershey's Kisses* brand has been rated as the top equity brand among all categories (Harris EquiTrend, 2010)

### **Success!**

In summary, identifying and leveraging deep consumer insights enabled Hershey to drive significant growth on this 100 year old brand. It made the brand more meaningful in consumers' minds. Importantly, the repositioning and the commitment behind the brand did more than bring strong business results; it re-established the *Kisses* brand to its iconic status.