

TITLE OF CASE STUDY: Swiffer Cleaning Products – Dysfunctional Relationships Campaign

This is the ***story of a proactive, consumer-centric approach to protecting a successful brand and pre-empting potential market threats. It is an inspirational story of how best-in-class consumer research is at the heart of the Swiffer brand's continued success.*** By bringing in the consumer at every step of creative development, from initial concept ideation to in-market check-ins, Swiffer has made the consumers' wants and needs a top priority.

It is this partnership between smart research and insight-based advertising that has helped drive the continued success of one of the biggest new brand success stories of the decade.

BUSINESS SITUATION & BACKGROUND

Revolutionizing the Cleaning Category

Launched in 1999, the Swiffer Sweeper was a new-to-market, breakthrough cleaning product that revolutionized the cleaning category. In the past 12 years, P&G's Swiffer has grown to become one of the most recognized and successful brands in American history, with retail dollars sales at over a half a billion! It has established itself as both a pioneer in the cleaning systems category and a pop cultural icon. Swiffer has had such a large impact on the way we think about cleaning, it's even created a new word for cleaning – "Swiffering."

Swiffer's first product launch, the Sweeper, quickly gained popularity among consumers for many reasons. It featured an electrostatic cloth that effectively picked up dust and hair, was easy to use and provided a much more fun and enjoyable experience than the tools they were currently using. Early adopters raved about Swiffer's improvement of the overall cleaning process and fueled the early growth for the brand. Effectiveness and Fun quickly became defining equities of the Swiffer brand. Building on the success of Sweeper, Swiffer grew its portfolio of products, launching an array of cleaning products such as Dusters, Wet Jet, SweeperVac, and more.

After such strong initial success, our challenge has been to sustain the momentum and continue to deliver sales and ROI growth for the brand. Doing that has required a clear understanding of what drove the early results and extending it into fresh, relevant messages that unite the various Swiffer products under a common brand equity with our target consumers.

Identifying the Target - The "Driven Caretaker"

To grow the business, we conducted **extensive quantitative and qualitative segmentation research** and looked at a few different targets. We honed in one specific target we called "*The Driven Caretaker*," which represented the biggest opportunity in terms of dollar sales for the brand. This target is a woman who has a high level of involvement in taking care of her home and family. She believes it is her duty to make her home as clean, hygienic and orderly as she

can for her family. And that she has to use trusted tools like mops and brooms to get a 'deep clean' on her home surfaces. Given this strong commitment to keeping her home clean and her high standard of clean, convincing this target to try Swiffer would be a huge win for the brand.

Key Objective: In order to convince our target to give up her trusted tools, we needed to develop a hard hitting new approach that would be engaging and motivating to her.

Reframing the Strategy

We decided to reframe the conversation around going head to head with her traditional tools. Our new strategy positioned Swiffer as a superior way to clean versus their traditional methods and inspired them to replace their old tools with Swiffer products.

The Campaign Idea – “Dysfunctional Relationships”

In order to really grab her attention, we came up with a creative idea that humorously paralleled her relationship with her traditional tools to that of a romantic relationship. In 2006, we launched the first phase of the “Dysfunctional Relationships” campaign. The creative idea was *“End Your Dysfunctional Relationship with Your Traditional Cleaning Method.”* By mirroring the excitement of starting a new relationship with someone who is better than a previous partner with faults, we highlighted Swiffer’s superiority and comparative strengths versus traditional tools.

Economic Recession Concerns & Campaign Wear Out Lead to Idea Refresh

The growing economic recession was starting to cause much concern for the brand. As US consumers adjusted to difficult economic times, they re-evaluated their spending habits and shopping behaviors in every category. As many families pared their grocery shopping lists to bare essentials, they reassessed the products they purchased to take care of their homes, too. ***Our challenge was to find a way to convince consumers to buy a product that is typically difficult to sell during such trying times – a premium priced product that could be perceived by some as being non-essential.*** And we wanted them to give up their trusted, traditional tools for this new product. In addition to the economic downturn, our ad tracking research and Marketing Mix Model (MMM) reports showed us that the ***heavy TV weight was resulting in increasing wear out of the current campaign and starting to drive down volume response.*** This was going to be Swiffer’s greatest challenge yet! More than ever, it was now crucial to the health of the brand that we keep our consumers engaged by refreshing the work and driving trial.

Wave 1: “Jilted Tools” (2009)

- We evolved the “Break Up” idea into the “Jilted Tools, where now the traditional tools have been replaced with Swiffer as the better match. The key change was that here the traditional cleaning implements are now personified in the executions as they try to reunite with their former “partner.” The creative idea was that *“now that you’ve switched to Swiffer, there’s no turning back to your traditional methods.”*

Wave 2: “Moving On” (2010)

- In the second wave, we showed what happens to the dysfunctional discarded tool once the user has moved on. In each execution, traditional tools were shown put away, and then falling in love with other discarded household items. The creative idea was *“Once you dump your old tool, don’t worry he’ll find someone else.”*

Wave 3: “Infomercial” (2010)

- For the third and final wave, we paralleled the human behavior of trying to dust oneself off and improve oneself after a romantic break up and applied it to the traditional tools. We incorporated a creative device of parodying infomercials’ overpromise on the self improvement benefits they can deliver. The creative idea was “*Try as they might to improve themselves, traditional cleaning tools will never perform as well as Swiffer.*”

RESEARCH STORY

The key to overall success in driving strong business results is that we were able to leverage smart market research in order to *truly strike the right balance between engaging drama, relevant context and believable product demonstrations* – key to converting our “Driven Caretaker” target.

In order to achieve this, we put into place a comprehensive research program to:

- 1) **Continuously identify and leverage drivers and barriers to Swiffer advertising,**
- 2) **Identify effective visual demonstrations,**
- 3) **Gain *upfront* consumer feedback on creative ideas via early creative screening,**
- 4) **Qualify copy’s potential for in market success, and**
- 5) **Track in market performance.**

Identifying Drivers & Barriers

Swiffer’s novel approach to qualitative advertising research includes convening a large, multi-functional team on a quarterly basis to listen to both users and non-user prospect consumers respond to *historical, current and future pieces of Swiffer copy*. This program ensures that new ideas are relevant enough to drive the business and that they don’t lose sight of historical drivers which continue to be meaningful. Specifically, Swiffer’s qualitative copy driver research program is designed to understand among current, lapsed and non-franchise consumers:

- Historical drivers that continue to be critical to Swiffer’s advertising effectiveness
- New drivers of Swiffer advertising given changing market conditions, product line, etc.
- Keys to relevancy and believability for Swiffer, and how this differs across product lines
- Elements that drive engagingness without being polarizing or overshadowing the product story itself

This regular use of **qualitative research** has always successfully ensured our new campaign iterations aren’t losing sight of what’s made our copy grow the business and 2009-2010 was no exception. Qualitative driver analysis revealed that while our consumers continue to be engaged in the campaign, they also continue to keep us honest by asking us to “make it relevant to me” and “make me believe you.” These are elements that could easily be overlooked in a product that is no longer “new to the world.” The transition from “Jilted” to “Moving On” to “Infomercial” was an engaging refresh of the creative idea and a logical evolution of the consumers’ relationship with her tools. But research also showed it was not enough simply to be reminded of what Swiffer can replace, our target must also still be able to imagine the usage occasions and believe that it will

work for her individualized cleaning needs. And balance was critical - Swiffer needs to convey performance and convenience, but cannot cross the line in marginalizing the cleaning process itself, which is so important to the satisfaction of our “*Driven Caretaker*” target.

Identifying the Most Effective Visual Demonstrations

Given the on-going importance of **believable cleaning performance** to Swiffer’s target and the continuous evolution of Swiffer’s products and technology, visual demonstrations need to be continuously improved and updated. In fact, in 2009-2010, we conducted extensive **quantitative product demonstration testing** to identify those demonstrations which drive the highest levels of purchase interest, liking and believability for each of Swiffer’s product forms. Testing revealed quite a bit of convergence on successful demonstrations among the forms that are better established and more familiar to consumers, such as Swiffer Sweeper and WetJet, but that the less familiar forms should utilize several different demonstrations to be effective in driving trial and interest. Based on scores comprised of intent to purchase, believability and liking, the lead demonstrations for each of the forms were identified and integrated into the campaign.

Leveraging Early Creative Screening and Qualification Research

Armed with findings on key consumer drivers, insights, and levels of engagement in the creative ideas, Swiffer then **regularly leverages a highly integrated qualitative-quantitative approach** to assess the storyboards and animatics the Agency creates to bring the creative idea to life.

For the two 2009-2010 campaign iterations, multiple storyboard versions of the strongest ideas across each product form were qualitatively evaluated by consumers to assess overall appeal, comprehension, believability, relevancy, and fit with Swiffer’s equity among other key measures. Qualitative results were used to screen out high potential boards/animatics and to give the agency revision direction prior to creating animatics for quantitative evaluation.

Highest potential animatics were then screened using Ipsos ASI’s early stage Next*Idea testing. The testing not only identified the creative with the strongest potential to drive sales, it also helped us to understand whether the communication objectives were being met; whether the consumers felt it was relevant to her; how consumers liked the newest iterations of the campaign; which portions of the creative were working hardest for the ads and should be optimized in the full up; and whether both current Swiffer users and non-users were responding to the ads.

After the cross functional team aligned on the leading creative direction, the executions were then optimized as the Agency created the final ads. These final ads were placed into **Ipsos ASI’s Next*Connect testing for qualification.** At this point, the foundation had been laid for the ads to succeed, using strong, engaging creative, coupled with compelling, relevant demos, resulting in consistently qualified ads with strong Copy Effect scores, time after time.

Following Through with In-Market Tracking

Once a new campaign iteration is on-air, we use **Ipsos ASI’s in-market tracking for an immediate read of the ads’ performance.**

We learned early on that Swiffer’s initial “Dysfunctional Tools” **campaign ads broke through well** in market. The **ads helped to improve perceptions of Swiffer’s key equities** of

effectiveness and fun, especially when more than one ad was seen. And getting consumers to think of Swiffer as effective, as well as convenient, was another key to getting non-users into the franchise.

Over time, as the campaign continued to air, it became **strongly identified with Swiffer**. By mid-2010 almost **1 out of 3 respondents could describe the campaign on an unaided basis** when asked about recent Swiffer advertising - more than double the levels just before the campaign launched, and in the same range as some very successful long-standing campaigns that have aired for 10 years or more.

Tracking has also been used, particularly in 2009-2010 to continuously monitor the campaign for signs of “wear-out” – including diminishing breakthrough, diminishing impact on brand measures, and an increase in the number of respondents expressing that they were tired of seeing a specific ad. This helped inform the decision to refresh the campaign twice in 2009-2010.

An analysis of tracking trends over the life of the campaign has shown a **clear improvement in media pacing based on using this data**. While earlier creative bundles had encountered periods of high “tiring” from viewers while still on air, more subsequent bundles were refreshed before they had a chance to wear out including the most recent campaign iterations.

BUSINESS RESULTS

Today, Swiffer has grown to become one of the most successful brands in household cleaning, well on its way to becoming a billion dollar brand. In looking back, it’s clear now that our Swiffer’s success can be attributed to the continual in-depth consumer research that is at the core of our brand. From qualitative focus groups, copy testing of animatics and fully developed ads to finally in-market ad tracking, we have been able to check in with consumers throughout every stage of creative development, helping us to refresh and evolve our work to keep our communications always relevant and engaging.

It is this consumer-focused advertising that has helped Swiffer deliver double digit 17% growth for the past 4 fiscal years. Specifically, the period between fiscal year 2008/2009 and fiscal year 2009/2010 showed 9% growth. This is a big win for Swiffer, especially given the fact that we’re selling a premium priced product during an economic recession. Not only did we have consistent sales growth, but our creative proved to be highly effective and efficient. Despite the fact that the total US Surface Care Market stayed flat, we managed to successfully refresh the campaign with each bundle, leading to step-change in media efficiency – ***TV Return on Investment was up more than 40% on average vs. fiscal year 07/08 and the percent of profitable media spending improved 270%.*** (Source: Marketing Mix Model report, Sep 2010, Analytical Partners)

Given our history of above benchmark copy testing results followed by in-market business success, Swiffer has set the bar very high for itself. To ensure this success continues, we will continue to make sure that the consumer is at the heart of every communication we create. Through a continued rigorous consumer research program, we will be able to keep our work engaging and motivating, helping to ensure long-term growth for our brand.