



## **2018 ARF Ogilvy Awards, Gold**

**Campaign Title:** Born the Hard Way

**Brand:** Budweiser

**Advertiser:** Anheuser-Busch InBev

**Research:** Ipsos Connect

**Category:** BREAKING THROUGH

### **Summary**

Budweiser hadn't been seen as a relevant brand to consumers and despite its recent success at establishing itself as a brand brewed on its own terms, it hadn't made a powerful connection with consumers. Knowing that these consumers felt pressure to live up to others' expectations, the brand sought to establish itself as the beer for them that, like them, overcame this pressure.

Through a mix of quantitative and qualitative research across three stages and five months of research, ABI partnered with Ipsos Connect to help develop the ad from the very beginning vs. just validate it at the end. This approach identified the founder's story of Adolphus Busch immigrating to the United States as a reflection of consumers' everyday pressures to conform and a relatable success story to aspire to; helped develop this insight into a firm idea for an ad; and helped grow the idea into a finished ad that would go on to dominate the Super Bowl conversation and make Budweiser the number one most talked about brand of the night.

***The irrefutable consumer insight:*** *Our generation feels pressure to live up to others' expectations of what we should do and who we should be.*

### **Marketing Challenge**

A deep ethnographic study of Budweiser revealed that it is a brand that is held in high esteem by Americans, but isn't relatable. It is a brand that belongs in the

museum to be forever remembered, but not relevant today. People still love the brand but sales have dropped steadily for the past 20 years.

ABI found an opportunity to reconnect with consumers at Super Bowl LI; the most widely watched sports event in the United States, but also one with over 50 advertising spots and marketers vying for consumers' attention with some of the strongest creative of the year. In this advertising environment, breaking through with the brand's message and meaningfully impacting brand perceptions was a challenge.

ABI sought to translate the consumer insight around pressure to conform to expectations into asserting that Budweiser is for those who "live life on their own terms" and have the ambition and drive for it. The brand felt it could credibly speak to this due to having established itself as a brand with a heritage of being brewed on its own terms despite changing beer trends.

## **Methodology**

Ipsos Connect and ABI partnered in an unconventional approach to communications development research; rather than test multiple final or even early stage ads in quant validation we started at the very beginning with the brand's manifesto explaining the essence of the brand, what it stands for, and the objective of the future communication. Research was used to uncover ideas and help nurture them through to a finished ad.

### **Three methodologies used were:**

- ASI:Labs (quantitative/qualitative integrated approach)
- Qualitative Groups
- ASI:Connect - Validation in context (multi-media clutter, brand specific benchmarks)

This multi-stage research program led to the most widely viewed Budweiser commercial of all time.

**ASI:Labs:** Four 2 minute long films with different expressions of the brand manifesto were shown to consumers. The consumer insights team and Ipsos discovered key "nuggets" hidden in the different territories.

- Adolphus Busch was mentioned in just 2 of the territories and only briefly, yet his story as a hard-working immigrant was engaging and had outsized playback with consumers.
- He gave credibility to the claim that Budweiser stands for those that live life on their own terms.

**Qualitative Groups:** :60 second rough animatic was shown to consumers and insights were used to make refinements to the copy.

- Strengthen core ideas of persistence, ambition and, pursuing your dream came through clearly and resonated with consumers.
- Give production directive to dramatize the journey itself to bring to life all the adversity the founder overcame.
- Clarify that the meeting between Adolphus Busch and Eberhard Anheuser so consumers understand that is the moment the brand was created.

**ASI:Connect:** :60 second rough animatic was shown to consumers and learning was used to further optimize the brand role and validate the copy. The results provided the company with the confidence to air the ad despite controversial current events due to a presidential executive order seen by some as anti-immigration.

### **What was unique:**

- The type of stimulus used with consumers.
- The approach to qualitative amongst participants was conducted “smartly” – participants were picked based on their quantitative responses rather than just their demographics.
- Moderation and insights generated were focused on the core issues, learnings, thanks to the guidance from the quantitative phase.
- The research program was multi-staged; early stage to explore the territory, qualitative to refine the desired film/story, and validation to optimize before airing.

### **Creative Execution**

Ad A is the manifesto film where the story of Adolphus was initially discovered as an idea with a strong potential when explored in quant/qual research leveraging ASI:Labs.

Ad B is the animatic that was tested in Qual and later validated in ASI:Connect.

Ad C is the final finished film that was aired during SuperBowl LI won a Cannes Lion award.

### **Business Results**

The ad was extremely successful. To begin with, it achieved, without a doubt, the best breakthrough in Budweiser and Super Bowl history. It also delivered on the brand campaign objectives in market post evaluation.

Validation Testing: +42 Index points higher than average Budweiser ad. +29 Index points vs. average ad (landing in the top 20% of the Ipsos U.S. database).



Super Bowl LI Share of Voice (SOV): #1 (17.4%)

Indexing **115 higher** on average on campaign objectives in **in-market** brand performance:

Campaign Objectives	Budweiser Super Bowl 2017	Budweiser Average
Is a brand with traditions and heritage	+8.4	+3
Is for watching sports	+6.8	+3.8
Is easy to drink	+4.3	+1.8
Is made with care	+3.1	+1.9

#1 on Youtube

4 billion impressions and 36MM unique online views