



2018 ARF Grand Ogilvy Award Winner

Campaign Title: Cleaner of Your Dreams

Brand: Mr. Clean

Advertiser: Procter & Gamble

Agency: Leo Burnett

Category: BRAND TRANSFORMATION

Summary

To reverse years of consecutive sales decline on the aging Mr. Clean brand, we uncovered a surprising connection between sex and cleaning that returned the brand into the minds, hearts and homes of today's modern cleaners.

Key to our success was researching both what worked and did not work in the brand's past, and intersecting it with a refreshed understanding of the roles and responsibilities of today's modern American household. Our research uncovered the insight, "there's nothing sexier than a man who cleans", inspiring the idea "Mr. Clean is the cleaner of your dreams". In execution, the campaign struck the right balance between using the Mr. Clean icon as entertainment, and establishing the brand's superior cleaning credentials.

The campaign drove sales across 82% of Mr. Clean's overall portfolio.

The irrefutable consumer insight: *There's nothing sexier than a man who cleans.*

Marketing Challenge

Mr. Clean invented the household cleaner as we know it today: liquid products that clean any room of the house and Erasers that remove impossible dirt like magic. But **at nearly 60 years old, advertising's most iconic character was starting to show his age**, losing ownership of any cleaning category or product equities. Previous Mr. Clean campaigns put the iconic Mr. Clean character in the front and

centre of all communications. And while character associations helped to maintain high top-of-mind awareness, the brand's equity became more about the character's life, and lacked a compelling emotional and functional difference that would justify its higher price tag. As a result, the business had been in decline for years.

What was broken: Mr. Clean became just a pretty face – he had charm, but lacked substance.

While the Mr. Clean character will always be an integral part of the brand's DNA, the transformation back to growth required getting our balance back: striking the right emphasis between utilizing the endearing Mr. Clean character that Americans love, all while returning to our historical benefit of superior, whole-home cleaning.

The competitive communications landscape didn't help us.

From a category communications point-of-view, the household cleaner category is a highly saturated landscape, with multiple brands outspending Mr. Clean at the time of the campaign going live.ⁱ

Our challenge was tall.

Without any new product news to save the business, and a significantly slimmer media budget than the category leaders, our task was to reinvent Mr. Clean from a brand level, making it more relevant and desirable than every other cleaner who can do the same. We set out to reverse declines by making Mr. Clean meaningful again, transforming the brand into a modern cleaner for today's modern cleaner. Our business objectives were twofold:

1. Break the commoditization of the household cleaning category, differentiating Mr. Clean as the preferred brand.
2. Turn sales declines into increases on Mr. Clean's two most valuable product lines – Liquid Cleaners and Magic Erasers.

Methodology

To enable us to successfully put the Mr. Clean brand back onto a path of positive differentiation and sales, we researched four things to inform our strategy:

1. Consumer's Perceptions of the Mr. Clean Brand

We conducted two North American omnibus studies with over 500 U.S. respondents as well as online and in-home qualitative discussions with over 60 people who were responsible for buying cleaning products and cleaning the house. The message we received came in loud and clear: Mr. Clean lacked distinctiveness – perceived as generic, old-fashioned and unworthy of the expensive price tag.ⁱⁱ

2. Historical Peaks in Mr. Clean Brand Relevancy

We analyzed brand tracking and sales data case studies from recent history, looking for correlations between spikes in the brand's appeal and sales. What we

found was consistent, and consistently funny: Mr. Clean has a surprising, but enduring sex appeal.

From being nominated by *People* magazine as one of its *10 Sexiest Men Alive*, to setting Facebook records with a video of his muscles bouncing to the Mr. Clean jingle - which drove 33% ad recall (vs. 9% CPG benchmark), 21% top-of-mind awareness (vs. 16%) and correlated to a 7% sales lift, even with his age, there is still a bizarre attraction to the man himself that correlates directly to sales.ⁱⁱⁱ

3. The Dynamics of Who's Cleaning in Today's Modern Household

From secondary research, we found that although 61% women still assume sole responsibility for cleaning, 37% of men now share the task. What was found next surprised us: sharing household chores was in the top three highest-ranking issues associated with a successful marriage—third only to faithfulness and good sex.^v

4. Existing Communication Conventions in the Cleaning Category

Undergoing a message, storytelling and tone audit of the previous five years of homecare communications in North America, we found that within the category, no brand was standing for anything more than the complicated, functional benefits of cleaning products. Across the board, positive and relevant emotional connections were lacking.^{vi}

Only with a deep understanding of all the factors at play were we able to develop a strategy that would change perceptions of Mr. Clean – tapping into the strengths of the brand's past, be relevant to the evolving roles within the home, and create differentiation by breaking the category conventions.

The Insight: **There's nothing sexier than a man who cleans.**

Creative Execution

To reassert ourselves as a leader, we had to communicate cleaning – a category people generally preferred to avoid – in a completely modern and desirable way. So, we used our insight as the springboard to our communications strategy: **recast the chore of cleaning from *dreaded* to *dreamy*.**

The Idea: **Mr. Clean is the Cleaner of Your Dreams.** *You can't help but love a man who cleans, and with Mr. Clean's range of tough products, he's sure to satisfy in every room in the house.*

Our media challenge was to identify a platform that wouldn't just reach a lot of people, but in contrast, would facilitate a conversation about the brand. The same data that drove our creative insight drove our media choices as well: we looked to the Super Bowl because it is the biggest TV event with the largest co-ed TV audience all year round – integral to our success, considering the relevancy of our insight and goal of modernizing the brand. Further, an integrated campaign

surrounded the Super Bowl, which expanded the campaign beyond just a one-and-done airing.

The spot, “Cleaner of Your Dreams” was the centrepiece of it all, featuring Sarah, seduced by a hotter-than-ever Mr. Clean, cleaning tough messes with his range of products, as he sexily dances throughout her entire home. By the end, we reveal that Mr. Clean is just a fantasy, and in fact Sarah’s average husband had been doing the dirty work. The spot resolves with “*You gotta love a man who cleans*” and Sarah pouncing on her husband in a heap of passion.

With the goal of building anticipation around Mr. Clean’s first-ever Big Game appearance, we designed a fully integrated, multi-channel go-to-market strategy, utilizing digital, social and PR to drive buzz and conversation before, during and after our Super Bowl TV airing.

A 3-phased plan – “Pre-Game,” “Game Day” and “Post-Game to Spring Cleaning” was developed with objectives and media touchpoints for each.

We kicked off with a PR tour, and layered in more paid channels day by day. We ran a YouTube 0:06s teaser that built up to the exclusive release of the full spot on The Today Show ten days before the big game. Once the spot was released, we shifted our media buy to run the full ad online, retargeting all those who saw the teaser previously or prior to the game on YouTube and Facebook. Come game day, Mr. Clean live-tweeted throughout the night, responding to people’s reactions to his new sexy look and joining in playful conversation around who cleans up at home. Finally, in the days following the Super Bowl, we released an extended cut in Pre-Roll and Facebook cinemagraphs of sexy Mr. Clean that continued to run as we lead into the Spring Cleaning season — the category’s highest volume driving time period of the year.

Business Results

The campaign was successful in achieving the following objectives:

1. Break the commoditization of the household cleaning category, differentiating Mr. Clean as the preferred brand.

- Brand favourability increased 9 points, compared to the benchmark norm of 1 point, as measured by Nielsen on Facebook. ^{vii}
- Online search volume increased 16.6x from pre-Super Bowl, vs. the next highest-searched brand in Super Bowl LI (Budweiser), who saw an 8x lift. ^{viii}
- On YouTube, Mr. Clean saw a 769.2% lift in brand interest, and 777.4% lift in advertising interest. ^{ix}

- Ad Recall of the 30-second ad was 6.62x higher than the YouTube Benchmark, and the 6-second teaser was 5.04x higher.^x
- In the three weeks surrounding Super Bowl, the campaign was picked up and covered by a variety of news outlets - from daytime (Ellen, The View and The Today Show) to late night (Jimmy Kimmel, Conan O’Brian and Jimmy Fallon), sports (Sports Center), business (Wall Street Journal) and lifestyle (USA Today, BuzzFeed, Huffington Post and The New York Times), the coverage spanned sources with a variety of audience bases. Proving that we transformed a topic that was once a directed to (and dreaded by) traditional housewives, into one that all Americans couldn’t resist talking about and sharing.
- In the ranking of Super Bowl LI ad campaigns, Mr. Clean was ranked #1 by Business Insider, #3 by YouTube AdBlitz (#1 in AdBlitz Home Care & Personal Care categories), #5 by Adweek, #6 on USA Today Ad Meter, received 4/4 stars from AdAge and an “A” from the Kellogg School of Business.
- Beyond the experts, the American people had spoken as well – Cleaner of Your Dreams stood out as not only a unique campaign for the category, but it’s talk-value exceeded that of all other recurring players at the Super Bowl. On Super Bowl Sunday, Mr. Clean had a higher Share of Voice on social media than any other brand that participated in the event.^{xi}

2. Turn sales declines into increases on Mr. Clean’s two most valuable product lines – Liquid Cleaners and Magic Erasers.

- Although P&G would like to keep detailed sales data confidential, sales on the products included in the spot — Liquid Cleaners and Magic Eraser, were up. Which is significant as these product lines represent 82% of Total U.S. Mr. Clean sales.^{xii}

Of note: there was no increase to retail display or distribution vs. the same period in 2016.^{xiii}

ⁱ Nielsen Ad Intel: Household Cleaners. Retrieved May 2017.

ⁱⁱ Agency conducted research: Online discussion panels and consumer in-homes; January – February 2016.

ⁱⁱⁱ Nielsen Brand Effect Results: Mr. Clean “Alt Uses” Campaign, September 2016.

^{iv} Mintel: Household Surface Cleaners. Consumer section: Responsibility for cleaning by demographics. US, November 2015.

^v Pew Research Center: Modern Marriage. July 18, 2007

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2007/07/18/modern-marriage/>

^{vi} Agency conducted research: February 2016.

- vii Nielsen: Mr. Clean Super Bowl Facebook Results, February 2017.
- viii Google Trends, February 2017.
- ix YouTube Analytics: JFM YouTube Performance Review. March 2017.
- x YouTube Analytics: JFM YouTube Performance Review. March 2017.
- xi Brandwatch, Social Media Tracking, Retrieved February 2017.
- xii P&G Sales Data, March 2017.
- xiii P&G Sales Data, March 2017.