

Award Designation and Category:

Fashion, Beauty & Home

Campaign Title:

Meow Mix "Remix" Campaign

Year the campaign took place:

Brand: Meow Mix

Creative Agency:

Media Company/Agency:

Research Company:

Additional Affiliated Companies: The J.M. Smucker Company, Publicis, Ipsos, Directions Research, Idea Couture

Summary of the marketing challenge, methodology, insight discovered, creative execution and business impact.

Meow Mix had an opportunity to improve salience and distinctiveness in the highly competitive cat food category. The team set out to make the brand famous again. The journey began with foundational positioning research, which included foresights work, several rounds of qualitative research, cross-functional workshops, and quantitative testing. The research uncovered the consumer insight that cat parents revel in their cat's unique preferences – including food. It also identified that the brand's iconic jingle and tagline were powerful brand codes. These key findings inspired the creative idea from Publicis. The Meow Mix Remix campaign imagines cat musical artists in a wide range of musical genres. Each piece of content celebrates a different genre's take on the brand's iconic tune, showcasing the idea that cats don't all sing the same tune, but they all ask for Meow Mix by name. Through copy testing, the videos demonstrated strong potential and the positive consumer reactions gave the team the confidence to move away from their existing campaign in favor of this bold new creative. The new campaign was

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aired on TV, digital video, and social channels beginning in November 2019. Retail sales for the brand improved by over 7% between FY19 and FY20.

Consumer Insight

We know that cats don't all sing the same tune, but they all ask for Meow Mix by name.

Marketing Challenge

Cats are finicky and their owners often switch from brand to brand in search of food their cats like. Meow Mix had lost relevancy, salience, and distinctiveness. It had become just another offering on the shelf. The team wanted to leverage the brand's powerful equity in its iconic jingle ("Meow, meow, meow, meow...") to make Meow Mix famous again as the taste cats love.

Methodology

In 2017 the Meow Mix team engaged in brand positioning exploration with Idea Couture. This included foresights work, several rounds of qualitative research, and cross-functional work sessions to develop the brand positioning. Several positioning concepts that included insights, benefits, and reasons to believe were tested via a monadic quantitative study with Directions Research. In addition to being able to identify the "winning" positioning, rich diagnostics helped to unpack the drivers of the positioning appeal and understand how the brand would be perceived versus competition.

Through this foundational research the team learned:

- Cats are complicated, finicky, and notoriously hard to please
- Cat parents revel in their cats' unique personalities and idiosyncrasies and will do anything to make them happy

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- The Meow Mix jingle and tagline are very recognizable and act as powerful brand codes.
- Meow Mix is seen as a lighthearted brand with charisma and a sense of fun
- Meow Mix stands out for having appealing food flavors, textures, shapes and aromas.

Learning about the strength of the iconic jingle & the consumer insight of cat parents wanting to revel in cat's idiosyncrasies (including finicky food tastes), inspired the creative idea from Publicis.

The Publicis team created animatics for "Luna" and "Heart & Paws," which were tested quantitatively through Ipsos' ASI:Connect methodology. Both spots showed above average ability to break through a realistic cluttered environment of media touchpoints and for consumers to link the ads to Meow Mix. The ads were considered significantly more unique and delivered a more distinctive brand message versus the previous campaign, which leveraged UGC cat videos. This gave the team confidence to move in this brave new campaign direction.

Creative Execution

Meow Mix knows all cats have different tastes, for food, play time, nap time, so why not music? Through the Remix campaign, Meow Mix is discovering and promoting cat bands from a diverse range of musical tastes and genres. Each video celebrates a different musical genre take on the brand's iconic tune.

"Luna" – In what can only be described as a dream project for all involved, Meow Mix partnered with the ultimate pop diva, Luna. Notoriously finicky, especially when it comes to the products she chooses to promote, Luna and her team pounced at the chance to help develop and choreograph a timeless music video that is a feast for the senses.

"Heart & Paws" – Perhaps no music genre emotionally connects with the listener more than the country ballad. So we enlisted the help of superstar duo Heart & Paws to help pluck at America's heart strings with a powerful

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impromptu performance in front of a live audience at their favorite honky-tonk, The Empty Saucer.

The Meow Mix and Publicis team made the bold decision to hire Joseph Kahn, a producer who has produced music videos for artists such as Taylor Swift, J-Lo, Snoop Dog, and Enimen, to bring the creative idea to life. Not content to settle for a traditional cat food advertisement, Joseph Kahn's visionary style helped to ensure that this campaign would stand apart and tap into pop culture.

To round out the campaign, the team leveraged the unique platform capabilities of Instagram to create Meow Remix Meow FM – a fun, interactive experience that allowed fans and followers to listen to all of the incredible cat artists, across multiple genres with just a swipe of their paw.

Business Results/Lessons Learned

The new creative was aired on TV and digital video beginning in November 2019. The campaign also included special activations on Spotify and Instagram.

The campaign led to significant improvement in brand health for Meow Mix. Purchase intent increased from 54% in fiscal Q1 FY20 to 69% in Q4 FY20. Likelihood to recommend increased from 32% in Q1 FY20 to 44% in Q4 FY20.

Full year retail sales improved an impressive 7.2%, from \$472.5MM at the end of FY19 to \$506.7MM at the end of FY20 (Source: IRI MULO).