

BRONZE

IT / Telecom & Digital



PUBLICIS QMP

Winning Christmas for Meteor
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COMPANY PROFILE

One of the largest and most awarded creative advertising agencies in Ireland, Publicis QMP is an affiliated agency of Publicis, the world's third largest and fastest growing advertising network, offering a wide range of services with a reputation for strategic planning and creative excellence.

Working in a manner described as “Collectively More Creative”, Publicis QMP work closely with their clients to create and manage ideas through every medium and discipline in the digital age and consistently develop iconic campaigns that have real impact.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Every Christmas, the top four players in the Irish mobile market – Vodafone, O2, 3 and Meteor - battle it out to see who “wins Christmas”.

The reason being simple, Christmas is the biggest sales period of the year and the network that is adjudged to have “won Christmas” is the one that achieves the highest net additions over this key sales period. Traditionally in

the month of December Meteor sell twice as many handsets as they do in a standard month.

Between 2005 and 2008, Meteor was the underdog battling it out against two multinational competitors in Vodafone and O2.

Nonetheless, Meteor achieved major success, doubling its market share and attracting 1 million customers by September 2008.

This achievement was based on the establishment of three key pillars for the brand:

1. Price Advantage
2. Differentiated Brand Personality
3. High Impact Advertising

Having witnessed the Meteor brand gain, Vodafone and O2, changed their game in 2008 and responded with increased competitive pressure.

They reacted firstly by focussing on their pricing structures to remove the value differentiator, and secondly, by reviewing their brand positioning and communications - attempting to shift from their cold, corporate look and feel to ape Meteor's warm, human brand personality.

With the mobile market at full penetration, attracting 'switchers' from other networks was the name of the game and Christmas would be the sector's biggest sales period in 2009.

To compete at Christmas, the networks traditionally went head to head with special offers and the latest handset range to attract switchers while attempting to minimise their "churn" rate (incidence of customers switching from their network) so as to grow share.

As Christmas 2009 approached, Meteor's brand personality was being copied by its competitors and, more importantly, it didn't have a market leading value offer to promote over this key period. So the advertising would have to work harder than ever to convince customers to switch to, or stay with Meteor, over the coming Christmas.

This paper tells the story of how, through high impact advertising, Meteor managed to stave off the efforts of its two main competitors and "win Christmas" 2009.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Three clear objectives were set for Meteor’s Christmas Campaign

Objective 1: To develop a high impact campaign that would drive key brand and advertising scores.

Objective 2: To achieve the highest level of prepay sales during this key sales period.

Objective 3: To reduce churn during the Christmas period by developing a campaign that would appeal to existing customers and drive upgrades.

THE TASK

Meteor was facing into the biggest selling period of the year, Christmas 2009, in a very different position to previous years.

The Brand’s core positioning was being heavily challenged - the big boys had warmed up their personality and lowered their prices and it was clear that in order to win the lion’s share of the switching market at Christmas, Meteor had to play to the key strength that remained – its high impact advertising.

But, would that be enough?

THE STRATEGY

We looked back at the consumer insights and brand truths that had driven growth and drew inspiration for our strategy from these.

Meteor had traditionally created brand charisma and growth through the archetypal story of the irreverent but friendly challenger taking on the big boys and driving value into the market.

This story was amplified at Christmas as people wanted a warm and fuzzy Christmas feel along with a comic twist, cool phones and great value.

Traditionally Meteor had an advantage at Christmas as our brand personality and leading value proposition let us go to town and be clearly distinct from the competition by highlighting these attributes.

And as Christmas 2009, and its challenges loomed, we decided to dig our heels in, ring fence what we owned and hit back at our competitors - hard.

Our strategy was to use the power of great advertising to suggest that the narrative story of the warm sociable challenger taking on the big boys still existed. We knew that this was a story people loved, and were drawn to, what made them love the brand in the first place.

Wrapping that ‘narrative’ in the traditional Christmas Meteor advertising tone, with a humorous twist and a clear, albeit not market leading, value message, would still build cut through and generate the required emotional affinity for Meteor.

The Idea & Communication Activity

We needed a creative idea that did warm, fuzzy and humour with a story that would ‘push’ Vodafone and O2 back into their previous positions of being ‘colder’ and more aloof than Meteor.

We also needed to promote value even though this was no longer a key differentiator for the Meteor Brand.

The creative idea was to draw people into the drama of an on-street Christmas ‘Carol Off’. Meteor being portrayed as the warm underdog everyman, with the competition being subtly represented in the advertising as the traditional, arrogant, cold and snobbish ‘big boys’ that nobody likes.

The Storyline

In the Meteor “Carol Off” campaign Meteor’s po-faced competitors were initially seen to be winning the “Carol Off”, outnumbering our Meteor gang, just as they do in the marketplace.

However, in true challenger form, our heroes fight back with the help of Meteor’s free calls and texts, summoning a wider network of family and friends who in turn spread the word and come to support our heroes in their efforts to win the ‘Carol Off’.

This scenario gave us, at least in the context of the campaign, a differentiated position with the traditional Meteor ‘twist’ that people had come to love.

Winning the ‘Carol Off’ symbolised Meteor once again winning the battle against all the odds.

Bronze Award - Winning Christmas for Meteor
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meteor

Get together with Meteor this Christmas



To celebrate Meteor's biggest and best range of Christmas phone offers we are giving away an amazing Sony Ericsson W205, perfect for playing all your favourite tracks.

For your chance to win, just answer this simple question:

What price is the Sony Ericsson W205 on meteor.ie?

Simply email "Mirror Sony Ericsson" and your answer to: competitions@meteor.ie and you could be in with a chance to win.

Closing date for entries is 14/12/09, for full terms see www.meteor.ie

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Sony Ericsson W995

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Samsung Z700

€79.99
Sony Ericsson W995

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Phones going for a song from €49.99



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Star performers at Meteor



€59.99 €79.99 €149.99

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Also, we clearly suggested that Meteor allowed customers to be more sociable, implying both a rational and emotional ‘price advantage’.

The message also said something compelling about the Meteor tribe that was hugely appealing – that they’re more social, more connected and more inclusive.

Bringing it to life

The campaign consisted of two 30 second TV executions and two 10 TV second executions, along with a strong support campaign online, on outdoor, press and radio.

The two 30 second TV executions told the ‘Carol Off’ story whilst at the same time promoted Meteor’s latest range of handsets.

The two 10 second TV executions were used to promote mobile internet and mobile broadband while the supporting media was primarily handset focused.

MEDIA STRATEGY

The campaign started in November, as is necessary during the busy Christmas period, was heavy weight and multi media in order to deliver strong visibility.

TV was the key medium with rapid delivery of 1+ coverage in week one and delivering average frequency of 4+ in both November and December.

Outdoor then launched on a variety of large formats to deliver the impact of the campaign, and then in the following cycle was used at a tactical street level to target commuters and Christmas shoppers.

Radio was used to deliver a strong call to action and to drive frequency for the message, using a mixture of the 15-34 year old targeted stations nationally and locally. Radio promotions on the key youth stations allowed the audience to interact further with the Meteor brand.

Press ads ran in a variety of national and local titles. They were used to show range, store locations, network offer & pricing, with a strong call to action on all copy. A catalogue insert ran in national titles to showcase the full Meteor Christmas handset range.

Finally, a presence in cinemas nationally from the last week of November right through to Christmas allowed the full impact of the TV ad to reach captive audiences attending Christmas blockbuster movies across the country.

THE RESULTS

The Meteor “Carol Off” campaign was an outstanding success and Meteor were deemed the outright winners of Christmas 2009 with the campaign outperforming against all the objectives set:

Objective 1: To develop a high impact campaign that would drive key brand and advertising scores.

Results

“Carol Off” was extremely successful in grabbing viewer attention and delivering advertising appeal, delivering the highest recall score ever for a Meteor campaign at 73%, well exceeding the target of 53% set.

	Target	Actual
Recall	53%	73%

The campaign also exceeded the brand awareness target by two percentage points:

	Target	Actual
Brand Awareness	70%	72%

While ‘Carol Off’s’ performance on bonding was 18% points ahead of the target:

	Target	Actual
Bonding	40%	58%

This campaign also performed above the norm and target for exact message communication.

In post-campaign research 39% of the respondents could spontaneously replay the exact message of the advert ‘Get together this Christmas with free Meteor Talk and Text’.

Again, this was an exceptional performance given that the target for spontaneous replay of this message was 28% while the average exact message

spontaneous recall for Meteor advertising is 26%.

Objective 2: To achieve the highest level of prepay sales during this key sales period.

Results

The table below shows how Meteor attracted the lion's share of available switchers over the Christmas period, 31% of switchers moved to Meteor.

'Switched to' figures:

	Pre October	November	December
Vodafone	25%	24%	24%
O2	28%	26%	22%
Meteor	26%	29%	31%

Source: Millward Brown Lansdowne Tracking Report May 2010

The table below highlights the net additions that each of the three main networks acquired in Q4 2009 and clearly shows that Meteor won sales/net additions.

	Net Additions (sales minus churn)
Vodafone	-7,000
O2	-23,000
Meteor	+19,000

Source: Comreg

Objective 3: To reduce churn by developing a campaign that would appeal to existing customers and drive upgrades.

Results

52% of Meteor customers over the Christmas period were upgrade customers so the campaign appealed to existing Meteor customers and prevented these from 'porting' to a competitor network.

This was also an increase of 5% on upgrade customers as a percentage of overall gross additions to the network following the campaign.

Analysis shows that upgrade customers are more valuable, having a higher ARPU (average revenue per user) than a new customer - €2.91 versus €24.90.

This is because upgrade customers are more likely to top up in higher denominations, and do so more frequently.

Impact on Behavioural Attitude & Payback

The table below compares the share of voice figures for Christmas 2009 for each network with the results for net additions (sales less churn) to each network for Q4 2009 (published by Comreg).

It is clear from this table that Meteor is the only network with positive net additions for the period and therefore won the battle for Christmas sales.

	Share of Voice	Net Additions (sales minus churn)
Vodafone	31%	-7,000
O2	22%	-23,000
Meteor	29%	+19,000

Return on Advertising Investment

Net additions x average tenure x Average Revenue Per User*

$$19,000 \times 12 \times \text{€}8.91$$

$$\text{€}6,591,480$$

Production and media investment

€2,400,000

Return on advertising investment

€4,191,480

*Average revenue per user for an upgrade customer = €32.91

Average revenue per user for a new customer = €24.90

Overall average revenue per user = €28.91

Eliminating other factors as key sales drivers (price, product and distribution).

As already detailed throughout this case, pricing was not a factor in achieving the sales success detailed, as the price gap between Meteor and its competitors had been closed.

Equally, the product range was similar – all competitors promoted a number of handsets with variable price points.

Meteor's price ranged from €49.99 to €149.99 and, as per previous years, the majority of the handsets sold were in the €79.99 to €99.99 range.

There were also no changes to the distribution channels during the campaign period.

The above results clearly prove that Meteor was successful in achieving its overall objectives and in 'winning' the battle for Christmas 2009.

This success was attained by creating a high impact advertising campaign that created a strong emotional link to the brand, a factor which in turn drove sales.

IN SUMMARY

Share of voice figures highlight that the top three networks invested heavily over the Christmas 2009 period.

However, it is clear from a comparison of 'share of voice' versus 'net additions' in the mobile sector that similar investments did not yield similar results.

On the contrary, the top two networks actually suffered a loss during quarter four of 2009. Meteor, on the other hand, achieved net additions of 19,000 during this period despite the fact that there was no change to the distribution channels or pricing during the campaign period.

The brand idea for Christmas 2009 was strong enough to achieve all of the objectives set – winning on sales, minimising churn and hitting the key brand scores.

The results achieved (given the challenges faced and the level of competitor activity) are wholly attributable to the 'Carol Off' advertising campaign.