



BULMERS ORIGINAL CIDER

...nothing added but time.

■ BACKGROUND

Back in the late eighties, the cider market was on a downward spiral. It was faced with ever-increasing competition from a buoyant lager market with positive brand imagery. Cider however was seen in a completely different light. Consumers viewed it as something they drank in fields as teenagers. It was perceived to be stronger in alcohol content and made you get drunk faster. Cider's brand personality was that of a drop-out going nowhere with a questionable future. As Bulmers was the market leader it was naturally tarred with the same brush. If Bulmers was to survive, it needed to look into its soul and find a new dimension to its character that could lift it from obscurity. Given the competitive nature of the drinks market and the increasing role of "badging" (the drink in front of you resembles your own brand character) the task for Bulmers was immense and one that would have to be long-term.

■ IDENTIFYING A NEW POSITIONING FOR BULMERS CIDER

Research had shown that the negative associations for the brand were image related. The positive aspects were product related. In general, consumers were quite well disposed towards cider as a product and as few seemed to actively dislike the taste, we had a good product, but no pedigree. When analysed further, it became obvious that cider had one of the simplest forms of production. Far from cider having some secret ingredient that drove you mad, it was in fact quite a natural product made from apples. Therefore, taking the simple process and aligning it to the brand's tradition and heritage, we developed a new positioning for Bulmers - the opposite to consumer perceptions for the brand at the time. We

could now create an aura of real quality and earthiness within its brand character. The seeds were planted for a new Bulmers image.

■ KEY OBJECTIVES

- To challenge the existing consumer perception of cider.
- To address the need to communicate the Bulmers product values.
- To reassure beer/lager consumers of product values/benefits and the discernment required in choosing Bulmers, without alienating core users.
- To reassure beer/lager drinkers on an image basis through product make-up /process/heritage and satisfaction.
- To provide a jolt to action which is credible and sustainable.
- To bring commercial success to Bulmers.

■ ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN UNDERTAKEN

Television advertising was felt to be the key to any brand that needed to re-image itself. Therefore, it would be the mainstay of the new campaign.

A new concept was developed which underpinned the brand's heritage, tradition and naturalness under the new theme line "*Nothing Added But Time*". It demonstrated the brand's unique attributes and presented it in a slow, melodic style with a highly memorable music track. The new theme line encapsulated the mood and tone - at Bulmers the process is never rushed.

Other media used were outdoor, press, radio and cinema, all of which adhered to the new positioning.

Bulmers must only be associated with the very best. It must always have a first class ticket.

Category 3
Gold Award

Young Advertising

Brian Hayes
Martin Watts
Tom Kelly

“Advertising has without doubt been the most influential factor in making Bulmers the fastest growing established drinks brand in Ireland in recent years. Our unique visual style coupled with our use of “world” music has served to clearly differentiate Bulmers from all other drink advertising and has allowed for the effective communication of our brand message of quality, tradition, heritage and naturalness. The overall market as a result has enjoyed very strong and consistent growth as can be seen from the independent data below.”

*Patrick Kierans,
Marketing
Manager
Bulmers*

■ INITIAL RESULTS

Our strategy was being endorsed in image and sales terms. Consumers recognised the re-imaging of Bulmers and there was spontaneous recall for “Nothing Added But Time” and the oak vats which were seen as an icon for the brand. The reaction from male BCI’s was particularly encouraging. Even more importantly the Nielsen* sales audit reflected the growing volume sales for the brand.

■ THE NEXT STAGE

It was stated earlier that the strategy was long-term. Our key objective for future communications was to express the same values in a fresh and innovative style, to retain consumer interest but adhere to the mood and character built for the brand in previous executions.

Consumers were beginning to accept the new brand persona so why change its clothes now?

■ CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

We sought to add a new layer to the brand. While keeping heritage, tradition and naturalness, we now introduced craft into the equation. Creatively, a series of television, press, outdoor, radio and cinema executions were developed which depicted the craft associated within the cider process. The crafts were carefully chosen to depict the brand’s intrinsic core values. Mosaic, Fly-fishing, Thatching, Oboe and Woodcarving set the tone. They were all crafts that required human skill, patience and time. The campaign again reflected the “Nothing Added But Time” theme.

■ CURRENT STAGE

The strategy remains intact and all the core brand values are maintained. Consistency is key whilst always striving to develop the brands persona in a credible and compelling fashion.

Late ‘95 early ‘96 saw the creation of the Bulmers ‘World’ television/cinema campaign supported by outdoor, press and radio. It also introduced a new campaign line to replace “Nothing Added But Time”

which although highly successful needed to be freshened to evolve with the brand but maintain the same sentiment. The new line “All in its own good time” reflects all of this.

Words and phrases, such as natural, wholesome, authentic, free from chemicals, take a lot of care, traditional methods, nineties values emerge spontaneously in relation to the advertising. It is clear that respondents are expressing the cumulative effects of advertising they have been exposed to over the past number of years.

What all this indicates is that a solid strategy backed up by commitment and a long-term view can yield very positive results.

It also draws attention to the fact that people are prepared to suspend disbelief when advertising offers them a reward for doing so. In the case of Bulmers the reward is a vision of a people focused in an idyllic world where time is an ally rather than an enemy.

Bulmers has become the fastest growing established alcohol drink in the Irish market. Consumers reaction and sales indicate that all our efforts have been vindicated as the brand goes from strength to strength.

■ CONSUMER REACTION

- There is now a strong belief amongst consumers that Bulmers advertising has played a key role in improving perceptions of the brand.
- Respondents see a clear link between the advertising and increased social acceptability of Bulmers.
- The slow, high quality style of the craft campaign with its emphasis on atypical cider imagery is winning through.
- Bulmers continues to pull away from brands it was closely linked to in the past.
- The overall theme taken from the ads is that great care goes into making Bulmers.
- There is a lot of good feeling towards the advertising. It is compared in quality terms with advertising for other big brands.



THE ON-TRADE CIDER MARKET

Year	Year on year % growth
1994 v 1993	+30
1995 v 1994	+30
1996 v 1995	+19

Nielsen Sales Data

- There is now a Bulmers World which is a world where good things are produced with care in a calm, unhurried atmosphere.

The Research Centre - August 1995

■ SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The cider market was in decline and suffered from a poor image with consumers. Bulmers was the market leader but was not growing.

A remedy was required.

BRAND DEVELOPMENT

Extensive research identified product values as a key factor. The cider process is simple and quite natural whilst consumers like the cider taste.

Bulmers new positioning encapsulates quality, tradition, heritage and naturalness.

ADVERTISING

A new concept was developed which endorsed the brand's new strategy. It demonstrated the brand's unique attributes and presented it in a slow melodic style. Television was the lead medium but was supported in all other media.

RESULT

Positive consumer reaction and strong sales growth.

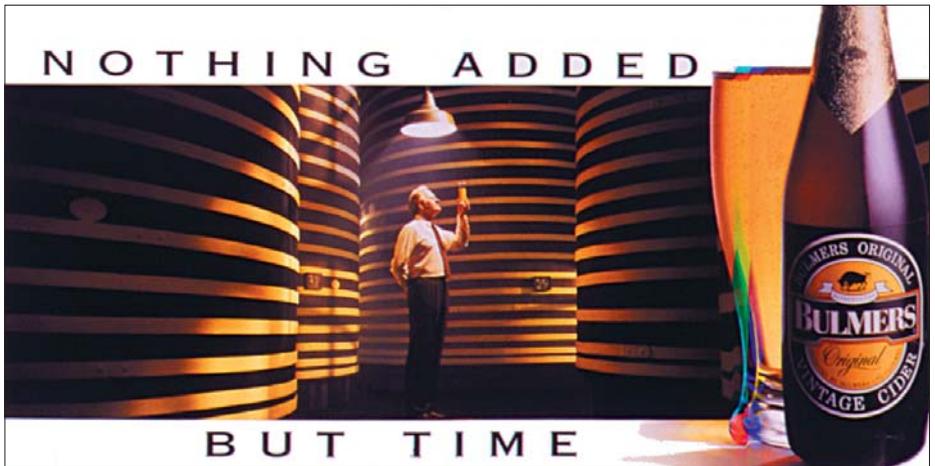
ON-GOING STRATEGY

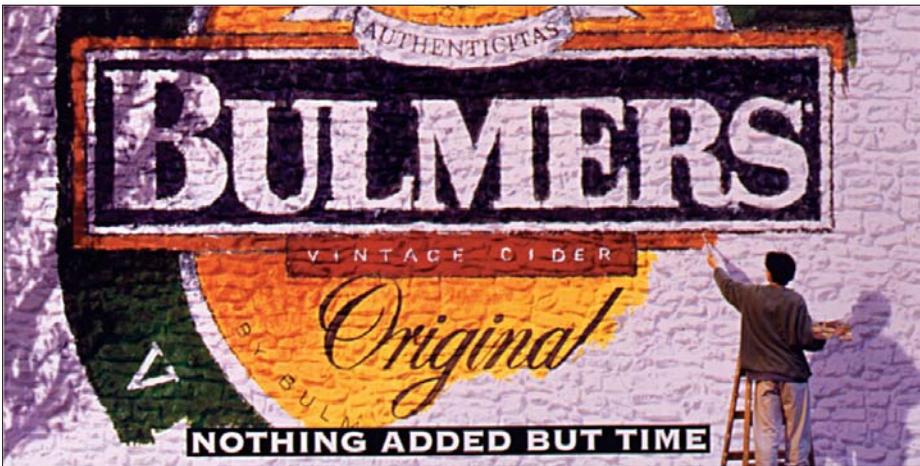
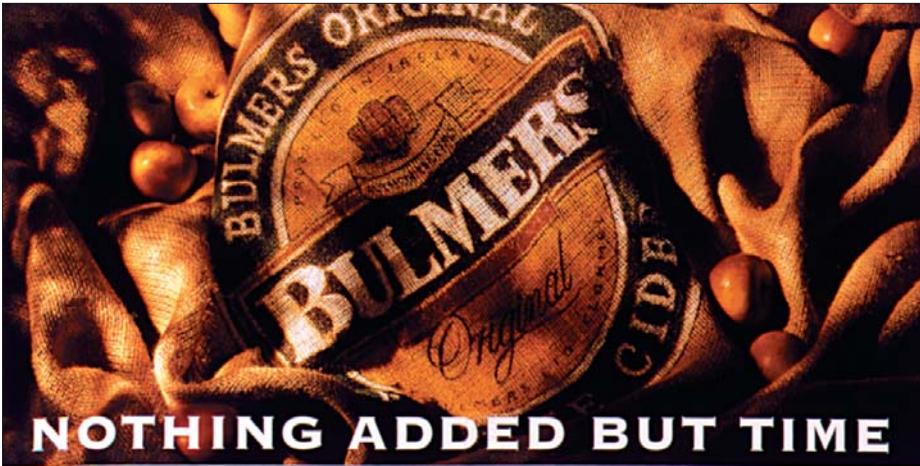
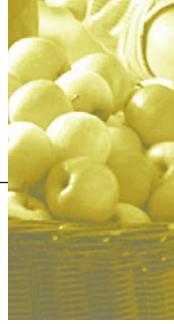
The strategy was always for the long-term and the only word added to the Bulmers positioning has been craft. It was essential that all the core brand values were maintained. Consistency would be key in maintaining the new brand persona.

SUCCESS

There is now strong recognition amongst consumers of a Bulmers style of advertising which depicts the brand as confident and assured, whilst reflecting the on-going strategy. Its success is measured by the brand's on-going growth as it is the fastest growing established alcohol brand in Ireland.

Advertising has been the most influential factor in Bulmers development as demonstrated in market research and client's endorsement.





Series of 48-sheet posters



'Nothing added but time'
TV commercial