

DBA

Design Effectiveness Awards

2009 Entry

1. TITLE PAGE

Project Title:	Boots Laboratories Serum 7 - New brand creation
Category:	1. Corporate / Brand identity
Sub category:	1.1 Design and implementation cost over £100,000
Client Company:	Alliance Boots
Design Consultancy:	Creative Leap
Current Date:	1st June 2009



CREATIVELEAP

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the story of the creation of a new brand and its successful launch into the highly competitive European pharmacy skincare market.

Boots is a virtually unknown consumer brand in mainland Europe. Where it exists, any awareness of the brand associates it with 'drugstore' health and beauty retail, a far cry from the traditional, specialist, advice-led European pharmacy model.

Recently taken in private equity hands, the key challenge faced by Alliance Boots was how best to leverage the groups expertise in product development, manufacturing, sourcing and distribution capability to drive and build brand equity for the Boots brand across Europe.

By de-coupling the Boots brand from its narrow (and in European terms, inappropriate) UK retail associations, we were able to create a new brand that was able to harness Boots long and rich heritage as a pharmacy-lead, innovative laboratory with impeccable healthcare credentials.

Without any above the line support the launch of the first skincare product under the newly created Boots Laboratories master brand captured 7% of the French pharmacy anti-ageing skincare market within only 2 months from launch, moving it to the number 6 pharmacy anti-age brand by share. A subsequent launch into Portugal has already achieved 4.8% value and 5.1% volume share.*

The programme of work delivered against all of the business and commercial objectives and achieved a ROI within the first year in market.

This was achieved despite the substantial brand equity, advertising expenditure and distribution strength of the established players, some of whom had been in the market for well over 100 years.



3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. Outline of the project brief

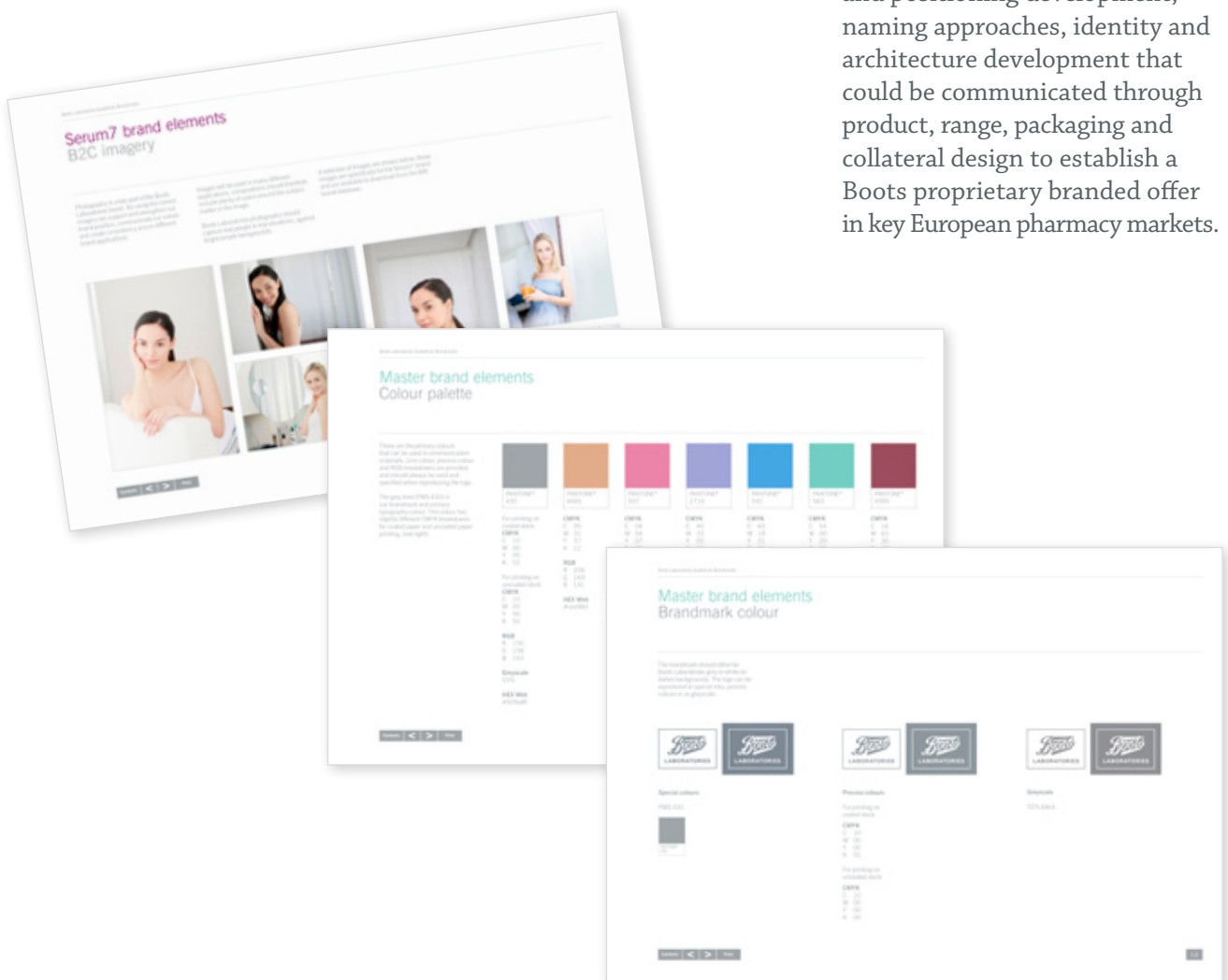
The fundamental rationale behind the merger of Alliance Unichem and Boots plc had always been to synergistically combine the wholesale, retail and product development capabilities and brand assets of the two organizations to increase shareholder value.

In essence, this would involve leveraging the Boots brand equity and product development capabilities and combining these with the international distribution reach and long established B2B relationships of Alliance Unichem.

The project brief was therefore fundamentally concerned with identifying what might be the relevant, motivating and differentiating aspects of the Boots brand and product offer that would be capable of developing and sustaining a credible and scaleable Boots brand franchise within international independent pharmacy retail channels.

This was to be a major international brand creation programme involving 4 key markets (France, Spain, Italy and Portugal). The key business objective was to create and launch a master brand & supporting product portfolio.

This would involve brand concept and positioning development, naming approaches, identity and architecture development that could be communicated through product, range, packaging and collateral design to establish a Boots proprietary branded offer in key European pharmacy markets.



3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

2. Description

Whilst the Boots retail business in the UK and internationally had a number of strong proprietary branded offers in the health and beauty arena (No 7, Soltan, Botanics etc.) initial research amongst some 1500 European pharmacy and consumer targets indicated that pharmacy consumers have a very specific set of needs and look for particular attributes in their choice of brands. We therefore developed a specific brand, leveraging Boots equity, to meet these requirements and maximise appeal.

A decision was therefore taken to develop a new specialist Boots master brand and product portfolio conceived and developed specifically for European pharmacy in terms of positioning, proposition, name, identity, packaging and communications collateral.

Key issues examined, addressed and validated as part of the programme included:

- Potential brand franchise and stretch (which markets and which categories?)
- Boots master brand positioning, name and visual identity
- Brand architecture (Sub-brand relationships and naming approaches)
- Product range brand positioning, naming and visual identity
- Product portfolio structure, pricing and packaging design
- Trade marketing and sell in documentation and presentation materials
- In store POS materials and consumer communication materials

Consumer trust and preference for pharmacy brands was clear from the research data. *

Why buy retail in pharmacy versus other outlets?	Total(%)	FR(%)	SP(%)	IT(%)
Pharmacy is specialist/better quality/expert	42.9	56.0	34.3	38.3
Scientifically/medically proven	6.8	9.3	3.0	8.0
Trust pharmacy brands/manufactures	39.4	26.0	43.7	48.7
Better price in pharmacy	2.2	3.3	0.7	2.7
Convenience	7.0	5.3	12.3	3.3
Pharmacists role in advice/recommendation	16.3	21.0	8.3	19.7
Ingredients	5.4	9.0	2.3	5.0

Furthermore, a clear preference was expressed by pharmacists for the development of a Boots master brand capable of communicating 'pharmacy expertise' and leveraging Boots heritage and history as a product innovator. *

Pharmacists	France	Spain	Italy
Prefer different brands	33%	34%	28%
Prefer single brand	63%	65%	72%

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

3. Overview of the market

European pharmacy is very different to the UK high street. There are no retail chains allowed by law and so pharmacies are independent and often traditional, family-run businesses. Gaining distribution more often than not means winning one store at a time.

These markets are also led by long established trusted brands in Health and Beauty retail such as Avene, Vichy, La Roche Posay, Roc etc. Some of these brands have a heritage of over 100 years in market and it was therefore vital for Alliance Boots to have a clear, relevant and motivating proposition for a 'Boots' brand in Europe to gain pharmacist support and drive consumer need/switch.

Many of the established brands also enjoy significant above the line marketing budgets. Given the specific nature of the trade and consumer audience we elected to use more targeted and efficient forms of media, designed to maximise brand visibility and message impact.

A combination of desk and proprietary research into the Boots brand and business history revealed a truly amazing story waiting to be told.

Before being sold to Reckitt Benckiser, Boots Healthcare International had, through brands such as Nurofen, Strepsils, Lutsine and E45, established an enduring reputation as an innovative, healthcare company.

Also, as a research laboratory, Boots had invented Ibuprofen, developed the No 7 Protect & Perfect anti-ageing skincare range made famous by the BBC Horizon programme and lead the field in UVB/UVA sun-protection technology.

Whilst virtually unknown as a consumer brand in Europe, Boots Healthcare International had, over the years, developed equity and heritage for Boots as a 'laboratory' with pharmacists in key markets. When prompted, this equity translated into significant levels of awareness amongst healthcare professionals.*

Pharmacists	France	Spain	Italy
Boots prompted awareness	88%	41%	61%

When tested as an endorsement for a brand proposition, the science lead focus of 'Created and developed by Boots Laboratories resonated well with pharmacists and consumers alike. *

Created & developed by Boots Laboratories	FR	SP	IT
Consumer preference	33%	34%	28%
Pharmacists preference	63%	65%	72%

This insight was to provide a significant building block in the development of the master brand and product brand strategies.

4. Project launch date

The launch to the trade happened in April & May 2008 with the consumer launch following in September 2008.

5. Size of design Budget

>£100,000

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

6. Outline of the design solution

Brand architecture

This was a major international brand creation programme involving concept development, refinement and qualitative and quantitative validation in several key markets.

An overall brand architecture was developed and validated establishing the relationship (in both positioning and visual terms) between the master brand and the product range brands.

Master brand positioning

A master brand positioning was developed under the name of 'Boots Laboratories' that built on the brands heritage and latent (subsequently prompted) awareness amongst healthcare professionals.

Product range brand positioning and naming

A number of product range brands have been developed and validated in terms of range positioning and naming approaches.

Master brand visual identity

The Boots Laboratories visual identity was created to reflect the 'scientific' heritage and healthcare credentials of the new master brand. Clean, simple, classic typography and line work combine to bring the Boots brand equity bang up to date and clearly position the brand in 'laboratory' visual territory.

Product range brand visual identity and packaging design

Visual identity and packaging designs have been developed and validated for a number of product range brands. This involved both qualitative and quantitative research programmes in multiple markets.

Brand guidelines were developed specifying the brand logotype, reproduction and free space rules and key-stone positioning. Secondary typography, grids, photographic style and colour palettes were also included.

The first product brand to be launched is Serum 7, an anti-ageing skincare range, based on the No7 Protect & Perfect product technology. The brand logo and visual identity design combines white, silver and a rich purple to create a premium skincare presentation, particularly suited to the pharmacy skincare environment.

A deliberately small, focused range of only 7 skus is designed to cut through the confusion and clutter of typical competitive pharmacy skincare ranges and create a calm and confident space in the retail environment.

“The Boots Laboratories visual identity was created to reflect the 'scientific' heritage and healthcare credentials of the new master brand.”

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Trade presentation and sell-in documentation

With a 'Laboratory' positioning based on scientific heritage and expertise it was vital that the trade presentation and sell-in documentation reflected the brand's premium, leading edge personality. All materials were developed, designed and researched with a panel of target healthcare professionals and key opinion leaders to ensure clear, credible, accurate copy and an appropriate visual & verbal tone of voice.

France was selected as the lead market for the launch on the basis that the strength of the existing established skincare brands and notoriously difficult to 'crack' French market would provide a challenging test market for the new brand.

Consumer communication materials

As well as premium packaging, high quality consumer communication materials were a vital building block in engaging interest in store and establishing consumer confidence in both the brand and the product.

In a foreign market dominated by local heritage brands and over supplied with 'miracle' products it was vital to create powerful, clear, cut-through messages and graphics. A great deal of effort was expended on making the science credible, relevant and simple to understand and a design style was created for all collateral that focussed on emphasising key motivating brand benefits and reasons to believe.

Project timetable

- Quantitative strategic research x 3 markets (August 2007)
- Qualitative concept research stage 1 x 3 markets (November 2007)
- Qualitative concept research stage 2 x 2 markets (December 2007)
- Quantitative concept/design test x 4 markets (February 2008)
- Trade launch in France and Portugal (April & May 2008)
- Consumer launch in France and Portugal (September 2008)

“It was vital to create powerful, clear, cut-through messages and graphics.”

4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Concept/design test results (February 2008)

Based on the concept/design test reactions to the concept were very positive with a strong appeal and very good levels of un-priced purchase intent. The range was seen as well differentiated from competitor brands with 60% of consumers expecting the range to be better than their usual anti-ageing brand. The offer and presentation was perceived as very credible with 87% saying they found the concept believable. Furthermore the range was seen as a good fit with the pharmacy environment, with 94% describing it as being appropriate to be sold in pharmacy.

Initial launch Results

France *

A very positive launch achieving **7% share and 6th position** (by units after only 6 weeks in spite of having only 22% weighted distribution).

Shares by value			
Sept	Oct	Cum	Ranking
3.5%	5.9%	4.8%	8th

Shares by units			
Sept	Oct	Cum	Ranking
4.1%	7.0%	5.7%	6th

Portugal *

A very positive launch achieving **4.6% share and 8th position** (by units after only 6 weeks in spite of having only 16% weighted distribution).

Shares by value			
Sept	Oct	Cum	Ranking
3.5%	1.7%	3.2%	9th

Shares by units			
Sept	Oct	Cum	Ranking
1.8%	4.6%	3.6%	8th



4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Post Launch

Far from being a flash in the pan the brand has continued to thrive in both France and Portugal and has retained significant share in both markets despite the lack of any additional post launch brand marketing expenditure to date.

The brands has recouped all of the initial investment within the first 9 months of trading and the success achieved to date has provided Alliance Boots with the business case for further significant investment.

Marketing campaigns and new products and ranges are currently in development.

Summary

The launch of the new master brand and anti-ageing product brand has been successful and the business objectives achieved. Not only has the brand captured significant share with only modest investment in a notoriously difficult market (France – arguably the home of skincare!) but it has a strong foothold in the Portuguese market and has established a robust brand platform for future growth.

5. RESEARCH RESOURCES

Research resources

Alliance Boots
Adwise
Reperes
IMS

6. OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

PR

An initial burst of PR activity in both the French and Portuguese markets helped to create interest in the Serum 7 brand and product range. This undoubtedly provided an initial boost to the launch activity but it was, by its nature, short lived. Thus, whilst market share peaked at the height of this activity, it has only slightly settled back despite the lack of any further support.

Street marketing

As with the PR there was an initial burst of street marketing activity at the launch phase to help create a buzz around the product. Once again this was short-lived and once discontinued has had a minor effect on share figures.

It is also important to note that both the PR and street marketing activity were based on the overall positioning, presentation, visuals and messaging developed as part of the brand creation programme.

