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## DBA 2009 Design Effectiveness Awards

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Project Title	<b>Ethnic Spice packs</b>	Design consultancy	<b>Honey Creative</b>
Category	<b>4 Packaging</b>	Current date	<b>March 2009</b>
Sub Category	<b>4.1 Brand - Food &amp; Drink</b>		
Client Company	<b>Spicentice</b>		

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“ We believed the rebranding and packaging would have a positive effect but to gain 38% (in 7 months) uplift in sales is outstanding. It’s all down to Honey’s brilliant RoadMAP™ and design work!”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

“ The re-branding and structural design solution is the single biggest change that has revolutionised our packaging, meeting with Asda’s strict ‘No Waste’ policy enabling the brand to be listed by them nationally”

**Liz Burt** - Independent marketing consultant to Spicentice - Non-Executive Director to Cornish Salt

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## 2. Executive summary

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### Brief

Created in 2005, the Spicentice proposition consisted of a core product range of little packs of herbs/spices designed to give the customer everything they need to make a meal. The brief to Honey was to refresh the brand identity, enhance packaging and improve marketing communications. Commercial planning took place in parallel covering aspects such as distribution, marketing and selling. Honey also creatively critiqued and art-directed the new website and e-tail strategy.

### Commercial impact

- Design effectiveness has increased sales by **38%** in first six months; an increase of **158%** is forecasted for 2009/10
- Customer accounts up by **10.4%**, with **107** new retailers signing up including:
- Asda's sales forecasted to rise by **39%**
  - Harrods who approached Spicentice direct
- New export markets: Ireland Superquinn: and Dubai
- BBC Good Food Show 2008 delivered a sales uplift of **36%**
- Redesigned architecture and new, clean design highlighted opportunities for NPD leading to a **16%** increase in SKUs
- Website impressions are up by **25%**, from **300** to **400** per day
- Average customer spend via the website has increased by **56%**, from **£10** to **£18**
- **22%** increase in visitors to Spicentice stands at trade fairs specifically to place orders
- New ownable structural design has saved:
  - **25%** in material costs
  - **50%** in shelf-ready/transit packaging materials
  - **79** man-working days per year (on assembly)

### Human effects

- Ketan Varu perceived as industry spokesman on packaging design effectiveness
- Employee headcount up from four to seven (an increase of 123%), with two part-time staff moving to full-time contracts. All the original staff have been retained
- Volume of work going through Spicentice's printer means that they now have a dedicated account manager leading to greater efficiencies all round

### 3. Project overview

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#### 3.1 Outline of project brief:

The Spicentice proposition was created by Ketan Varu in 2005 and consisted of a core product range of little packs of 100% pure herbs and spices with an easy-to-follow recipe and a shopping list for all the fresh ingredients, all designed to give the customer everything they need to make a delicious meal for four very quickly.

The brief to Honey was to refresh the brand identity, enhance packaging and improve marketing communications. Commercial planning took place in parallel covering aspects such as distribution, marketing and selling. Honey also creatively critiqued and art-directed the new website and e-tail strategy.

#### 3.2 Description

Spicentice is one of the market-leaders in the emerging 'kitchen cheats' category, offering a compelling blend of authenticity, provenance and convenience, as well as nutritional benefits over the more established ethnic 'cook-in-sauce' category.

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### 3. Project overview

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#### 3.3 Overview of market

In 2007, total demand for industrial seasonings, herbs and spices totalled 101,000 tonnes, having grown from a volume in 2002 of 94,400 tonnes with an annual average growth equivalent to 1.4%. Value in 2007 reached £197million. These figures make this ingredient sector one of the most important in UK food manufacturing (Source: Eurofood, 6 July 2000).

Reasons for market growth include the following factors:

- The ‘food porn’ trend triggered by the rise of ‘celebrity’ chefs and fuelled by numerous TV cooking shows
- The emergence of ‘cash-rich:time-poor’ lifestyles, where instant gratification is demanded for minimal effort
- Investments in home kitchens and the joint modern phenomena of ‘kitchen envy’ and ‘kitchen theatre’
- The popularity of ethnic dishes – particularly the spicier end of the spectrum – triggering attempts to recreate ‘restaurant quality’ meals
- The emergence of a ‘kitchen cheats’ category, inspired by Delia Smith
- Changes in the supply side of the equation where supply chain and web efficiencies have combined to facilitate a number of ‘spice pack’ start-ups from different culinary regions
- And perhaps most importantly in light of the recession, the return to home-dining and scratch cooking:

“Herbs and spices are doing particularly well. With the economic downturn, we have seen the focus return to scratch cooking in a big way - this is evident in the volume of sales we have experienced in this category. Spicentice is a unique product that makes the scratch cooking experience easy and convenient for the customer.”

(**Rachel Kelly**, Trading Assistant for Condiments and Cooking at Asda  
(Article from The Grocer – Saturday 6 June 2009)

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### 3. Project overview

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#### 3.3 Overview of market - Cont.

The main players are: **Kitchen Guru; SpiceofLife; Chimans**

“In terms of purchasing power, the research shows sales of Indian cuisine surpassed Chinese by £189 million in the last year alone - suggesting Brits are favouring cooking Indian food at home in the kitchen. Indeed, as the current economic climate may be encouraging Brits to recreate their favourite restaurant experience at home, new research from Mintel suggests that while six in ten adults enjoy ethnic food, they are ditching the ready meals for their own healthier versions.

When it comes to our home eating habits, four in ten adults who eat ethnic food enjoy it at home once a month and one in ten eat it twice or more in the week. Indeed, 62% of Brits said that cooking ethnic food at home is cheaper than getting a takeaway and, proving we are enjoying the fruits of our cooking labours, 36% said cooking ethnic food at home tastes just as good as having a takeaway. Just 6% of Brits claim to never eat ethnic food”

**Source** - Mintel Oxygen Reports  
Ethnic Cuisine - UK - March 2009

“The current economic climate seems to be impacting on Brits seeking to recreate the restaurant experience at home. The initial establishment of popular favourites – Chinese and Indian cuisine – have led to a broadening of the market and increased popularity of different types of ethnic food.”

**Emmanuelle Bouvier** - Senior Market Analyst at Mintel

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## 10. Entry form

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### 3.4 Project launch date

5 September, 2008 at Speciality Fine Food Fair London.

### 3.6 Outline of design solutions

Once the design strategy had been agreed, Honey's focus was on the creation of a range of packaging solutions that reflected an upgrade in product and packaging quality, reflecting the 'premium ingredient' proposition. Our solution successfully met a broad range of strategic, creative, production and 'Green' criteria and provide a solution that:

- Presented the new brand, product architecture and hierarchy of information in a way that enabled the business to clearly communicate the offer in a unique and ownable way that differentiated the brand from its competitors and which achieved stand-out on shelf
- Incorporated black to reflect the premium positioning of the product and to contrast with the strong colour tags. The simplified logotype was foiled to provide a mark of excellence
- Integrated several components – e.g. shopping list, recipe, ingredient lists, brand stories – in a way that was user-friendly and easy-to-use
- Engaged with the customer and instilled a sense of fun, e.g. the interior of the pack is printed with a recipe and tips for use as well as a brand story, all topped off with an illustration that if you join all the packs together make a mural
- Established a unique graphic language to reflect different culinary regions and flavour strengths e.g. creation of a simple but effective family of icons for: Indian; Thai; Moroccan; Jamaican; Cajun; Portuguese
- Those regions were expressed via a 'luggage tag' device which was indicative of the region the product was focused on, colour-coded with an icon to help speed up the purchase selection
  - the reverse of the luggage label houses a promotion that enables Spicentice to collect customer details enabling them to build a database which provided the basis of a dialogue between consumer and brand
- 'Green' issues were addressed by using environmentally-friendly inks and by reducing packaging (costs and materials) as a result of removing the need for pack sides

## 4-7. Summary of results

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### Commercial impact

The following table is a detailed illustration of the positive effect the re-branding exercise has had on sales and growth:

	Original numbers 2007/08	2008/09	Forecast 2009/10
<b>Sales uplift %</b>		<b>38%</b>	<b>158%</b>
Original SKU units	19		
NPD SKU units		3	3
New key distribution sales ie Asda / Superquinn			£ 150,000
<b>Volume in units</b>	<b>127,638</b>	<b>155,779</b>	<b>329,188</b>
<b>Volume increase units</b>		<b>28,141</b>	<b>201,550</b>
<b>Volume increase %</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>158%</b>

- The redesigned architecture and new clean design gave clarity to the product offering demonstrating on shelf where Spicentice could expand via NPD. This has resulted in a 16% increase in SKUs including new products such as Moroccan Lamb Tagine, Indian Chicken Korma and Jamaican Jerk chicken all launching in September 2009
- Ideas for new categories are constantly being scoped and a brief for a Chutney line has just been submitted to Honey for development.
- Further lines are being discussed, all with the aim of providing the customer with a broad range of products that build and supplement different meal offerings e.g. breads and sauce accompaniments
- Website impressions have gone up **25%**, from **300** per day to **400** and spend has increased by **56%**
- 22% more people are visiting the Spicentice stands at the trade fairs especially to place orders

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## 4-7. Summary of results - cont.

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### Benefits of new pack structure in delivering sales and saving costs

Spicentice has just been listed nationally by Asda, growing from a small display in local farm stores in the midlands. This was on condition that there was a reduction in the amount of packaging weight and transit packaging (saving space and weight), which has been successfully implemented. In other words, these changes became a sales aid and have saved costs (see above results matrix) on materials, weight, carbon footprint (See Appendix at the back of this document for the article:

'Clever Little Packs From Spicentice Make It Big at Asda' which appeared in The Grocer, 6 June 2009)

“We’re not only excited about this latest opportunity but also delighted with the rapid growth in sales achieved since investing in a complete re-brand last year. Our range now has greater shelf presence and retailers appreciate the linked sales opportunities it offers.”

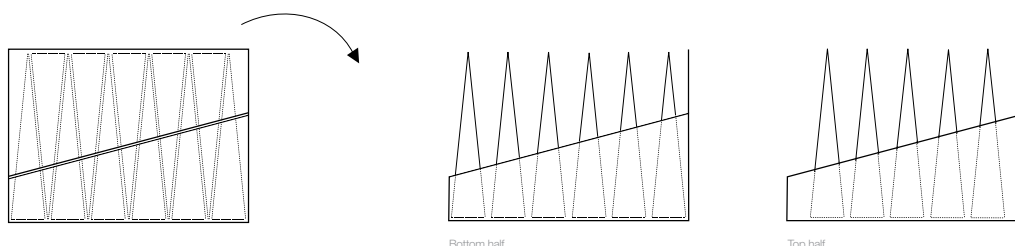
**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice (on learning that Asda are to list products nationally)

Rachel Kelly, Trading Assistant for Condiments and Cooking at Asda said:

“Spicentice is a unique product that makes the scratch cooking experience easy and convenient for the customer... the range of clever little ‘No Waste’ packs of 100% pure herbs and spices are guaranteed free from colourings, preservatives and additives.”

(Both quotes taken from the article: 'Clever Little Packs From Spicentice Make It Big at Asda' which appeared in The Grocer, 6 June 2009 – See Appendix at the back of this document for the article)

- The new ownable structural design has reduced packaging materials by 25% by removing unnecessary card/films and printing on the inside of the pack
- A 50% reduction in shelf-ready/transit packaging materials has also been achieved
- Further cost savings have been achieved due to the fact that the new pack structure is far easier to assemble – i.e. one simple step is now all that is required instead of three. This is reflected in a saving of 79 man-working days per year.





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## 4-7. Summary of results - cont.

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### Increase in market share:

- Spicentice has increased customer accounts by **10.4%** signing up **107** new retailers ranging from independents such as farm shops, butchers, delis and big-league players such as Asda and Harrods
- New export markets are being opened up. This includes Superquinn in Ireland who have just placed an order with – Superquinn have been so impressed that they've since so (remove) recommended Spicentice to a distributor
- Negotiations are currently taking place with a potential customer in Dubai

### Increase in footfall

“Spicentice has become a clear destination purchase with 16 independent retailers reporting that they have spoken with their customers who have specifically asked for the product or informed them that is the reason for visiting the store.”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

### Changes in perception

- Originally, the Spicentice range had been rejected by Harrods. Immediately following the re-branding exercise, that decision was reversed and Harrods approached Ketan Varu direct with the view of getting the brand on shelf as quickly as possible
- Christmas is usually a quiet time in this category, however the re-branding exercise meant that Spicentice were able to buck the trend. At the BBC Good Food Show in November 2008, Spicentice did nothing different from the year before taking the same stand, at the same size, in the same position with the same promotional offer (£10 for six packs plus one free)

“Our success at the BBC Good Food Show demonstrated that it was the packaging – and the packaging alone – that directly effected the uplift in sales by 36% from 2,983 (in 2007) to 4,062 sold the following year. It was such a success that we had to draft in an extra person to help on the stand for three days of the five-day show!”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

- In the course of the last few months, as a direct result of the success of the re-launched brand, Ketan is increasingly being seen as an expert speaker. He has spoken several times at De Montford University and is speaking at the East Midlands Food & Drink Forum in mid-June. The basis of his presentations (which have been created by Honey) is the effect of great design on building his bottom line and in building awareness
- The trade press now contact Spicentice when they want commentary on the category
- Trade fair organisers are approaching Spicentice direct inviting them to attend

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## 4-7. Summary of results - cont

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### **Improvements in staff morale and changes in staff behaviour/productivity**

The Spicentice Management Team have been involved and engaged in the re-branding exercise from the outset:

“We used the design and the creative process as a catalyst for change and improvements in the way that we work together.”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

Although there was an initial resistance to the change in manufacturing process, staff are now fully supportive of it:

“They see the advantages of the new structure and enjoy working with the new design.”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

### **Improved recruitment and staff retention**

As a direct result in the increase of sales driven by the re-branding exercise, employee headcount is up from four to seven, with two part-time staff moving to full-time contracts.

All the original staff have been retained.

	Original FT	Original PT	Total hours PA
Original staff			
New staff	3		5,040
Total staff today	7		11,760
<b>Increase in hour</b>			<b>6,480</b>
<b>Increase in labour %</b>			<b>123%</b>

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## 4-7. Summary of results - cont.

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### **Improved vendor/supplier relationships**

The re-branding exercise has led to increased loyalty amongst suppliers:

“They have loved the professional ‘look and feel’ of the new brand and are obviously enjoying the increase of products and materials we’re buying from them to reflect the increase in sales!”

**Ketan Varu** - CEO, Spicentice

The volume of work going through Spicentice’s preferred printer means that they have been awarded a dedicated account manager meaning that issues can be prevented in advance, or resolved more quickly than before.

### **Improvements in customer and chef perception and awareness**

(Feedback provided by customers direct to website, via e-mail)

“Spicentice is an ingenious idea. My favourite is the Methi Chicken Kit. The amounts were perfect and the dish tasted great after I followed the straight forward easy steps.

This is a good way of introducing Indian home cooking to someone who doesn’t want anything too complicated but is adventurous in trying out and experimenting with new flavours.”

**Manju Malhi** – The famous celebrity chef who regularly appears on our TV screens cooking delicious Indian cuisine has also been trying Spicentice dishes and gives us the ‘big thumbs up!’



“Fantastic!!! I cooked (and I don’t feel like I’m lying when I say that!!) prawn curry and coriander chicken last night together with the bombay potatoes. So delicious and easy to make!!! I have just placed my second order and have recommended Spicentice to everyone I know. Can’t wait for my second Spicentice dinner party. Thank you for making it so easy!”

**Demelza**

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#### 4-7. Summary of results - cont

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“This is a great opportunity for those like myself who enjoy cooking and would like to attempt homemade curries but are daunted by the often vast amounts of spices needed in Indian cuisine. These packets are ingenious! I love cooking dishes from scratch and since discovering your products I won't be going back to jars of curry! What a fantastic way of preparing your own Indian curries - it's so enjoyable to cook with the spices and feel like you're putting a bit of love into what you're cooking rather than popping open a jar and adding chicken.”

**Charlotte.**

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## 8. Research resources

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The project team has looked at research and used:

- Published data
- Design team trade and sector best practice research, i.e. competition shopping
- Detailed review of competitor packs

**Other influencing factors:**

- One PR article (two since the re-branding exercise)
- We attend the same five trade events each year, so no additional activity
- No above or below-the-line activity



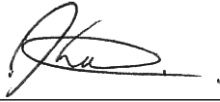
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## 10. Entry form

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Submitted by **Spicentice**

Signature



Name **Ketan Varu**

Position **CEO**

Submitted by **Honey**

Signature



Name **Doug James**

Position **Managing Director**

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## Appendix

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### Customer and celebrity chef feedback (taken from Spicentice website)

#### Jeni Talks Great Food Live!

We sent Jeni from UKTVFood some of our spicy kits to sample as they were having a curry week. She and her fellow chefs thought they were fantastic and gave us the big thumbs up!

“Spice N Tice is an ingenious idea. My favourite is the Methi Chicken Kit”.

Manju Malhi – The famous celebrity chef who regularly appears on our TV screens cooking delicious Indian cuisine has also been trying Spice-N-Tice dishes and gives us the ‘big thumbs up!’

Here’s what she say’s...

“Spice N Tice is an ingenious idea. My favourite is the Methi Chicken Kit. The amounts were perfect and the dish tasted great after I followed the straightforward easy steps. This is a good way of introducing Indian home cooking to someone who doesn’t want anything too complicated but is adventurous in trying out and experimenting with new flavours.”

“..so delicious and easy to make!!!”

“Fantastic!!! I cooked... (and I don’t feel like I’m lying when I say that!!) prawn curry and coriander chicken last night together with the bombay potatoes..so delicious and easy to make!!! I have just placed my second order and have recommended Spice N Tice to everyone I know. Can’t wait for my second Spice N Tice dinner party... thank you for making it so easy!” - Demelza

“We just love all of the range all superb, with Chicken Methi being the firm favourite.” - Edna.

“\*\*\*THE BEST\*\*\* Even better than our local takeaway..”

“Wow - The Coriander Chicken and Jeera Chicken was fab \*\*\*THE BEST\*\*\* Even better than our local takeaway and that says some thing” - Claire

“All my friends are now hooked on the Coriander Chicken.” - Jacquie.

“Wow!! Spice N Tice is the only curry we eat, no more takeaways, just the real thing, cooked ourselves!!!...”

Wow!! Spice N Tice is the only curry we eat, no more takeaways, just the real thing, cooked ourselves!!! Please bring out some new recipes though, would love to see a ‘Garlic Chilli Chicken’ or ‘Chicken Tikka Masala’ “ - Kat

“Fantastic - no need to visit the takeaways any longer! True authentic taste, we are working our way through the range (very happily!)” - Nick

“The best curry we have ever had and in my opinion low fat!”

“We cooked Methi Chicken in our caravan whilst away for the weekend, with limited resources and it turned out fantastic! The best curry we have ever had and in my opinion low fat! We adore curries and Indian food as we got married in Goa and are hooked on all things Indian, we are definitely going to buy lots more!!!! Thanks so much!” - Emma

“I’ve been bodging around for years trying to cook authentic curries from recipes in books. They never quite made it to taste just right...I just cooked the Lamb Madras and it was perfect!” - Ian from Weymouth.

“These packets are ingenious!”

“This is a great opportunity for those like myself who enjoy cooking and would like to attempt homemade curries but are daunted by the often vast amounts of spices needed in Indian cuisine. These packets are ingenious! I love cooking dishes from scratch and since discovering your products I won’t be going back to jars of curry! What a fantastic way of preparing your own Indian curries - it’s so enjoyable to cook with the spices and feel like you’re putting a bit of love into what you’re cooking rather than popping open a jar and adding chicken.” - Charlotte.