



MYSTERY

CONSUMER CASE STUDY

Launching a premium spirit

Defining a brand that connects with your target audience

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“Mystery have been the driving force behind Monkey Shoulder’s brand design and creative executions since its launch in ‘05. Its a pleasure to work with a team who show a real enthusiasm and passion, combined with great concepts and attention to detail.”

Rob Curteis
Innovation Manager - William
Grant & Sons Distillers Ltd

We all know that the traditional market for whisky drinkers is getting older, yet the boom in clear premium spirits with 20-40 somethings suggests there is strong potential for a Whisky brand that can shake off the old man’s image whilst retaining all the quality cues that characterise premium status.

In order to tap this growing market, persuade customers to trade up from JD & Coke and encourage new people to try Whisky, William Grant’s & Sons created a smooth and rich, unique ‘Triple Malt’ that has exceptional finish on it’s own and is also ideal as a base for cocktails.

The name ‘Monkey Shoulder’ comes from an injury that the malt men used to suffer - in years gone by - and the story is told on the back-label of every bottle. The challenge for Mystery was to develop the launch collateral in a way that balances the irreverence of the name with the heritage and quality of the product. The danger was that by creating an unusual name that attracts the target audience, it could risk being perceived as a novelty item.

Our role was to help define a unique and premium character that the customers could identify with. Like the car you drive, the brand of Whisky you drink says something about you. We helped create brand communications that project Monkey Shoulder as a fun iconoclast in the tradition of Whisky that younger drinkers can express their individuality through.





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“Just for Mystery, we’ve created the ‘Mysterious Monkey’: 37.5ml Monkey Shoulder Triple Malt Scotch Whisky, 12.5ml Hazelnut Liqueur, 25ml Apple Juice, 1 spoon Honey, 2 lemon zests. Shake all ingredients and strain into rocks glass filled with cubed ice. Garnish with lemon twist or lemon wheel.”

Rob Curteis
Innovation Manager - William Grant & Sons Distillers Ltd

The early gate-keepers for the route to market were the style-bar ‘mixologists’. This trend-conscious group are continually courted by drinks companies to help promote their innovations, so we needed a launch that would become a talking point and generate a following for Monkey Shoulder.

Working closely with William Grant’s and their PR agency, Mystery helped create a launch event that did just that. The theme for the event was fancy-dress as gangsters and moles. We designed the invitation as a playing-card that was sent out in the ribbon of a hat. All 150 of the country’s top mixologists and the industry press turned up to the ware-house/speakeasy in amazing outfits and were taught how to play ‘Monkey Poker’, a three-card game - reinforcing the products unique ‘Triple Malt’ characteristic. Monkey Poker has since become a regular monthly fixture on the barpersons calendar.

Inspired by the original bottle packaging by Lewis Moberly, Mystery went on to develop the brand identity guidelines in order to define consistent brand communications across different media. We have also created a print advertising campaign - which illustrates the characteristics of the product with a range of quirky monkey characters - point of sale, bags, t-shirts, party invitations, training DVD and secondary packaging for the French and UK market.

We are delighted to report that Monkey Shoulder’s launch was sufficient to develop the brand loyalty needed to start off-premise sales - initially through boutique food-halls and off-licenses and subsequently in to multiples such as Tesco.

If you would like to hear more or discuss how strategic design can help launch your innovation and win the loyalty of your customers, then please call Dan on 020 7456 7833 or email dan@mystery.co.uk to arrange a meeting. We look forward to hearing from you.

